

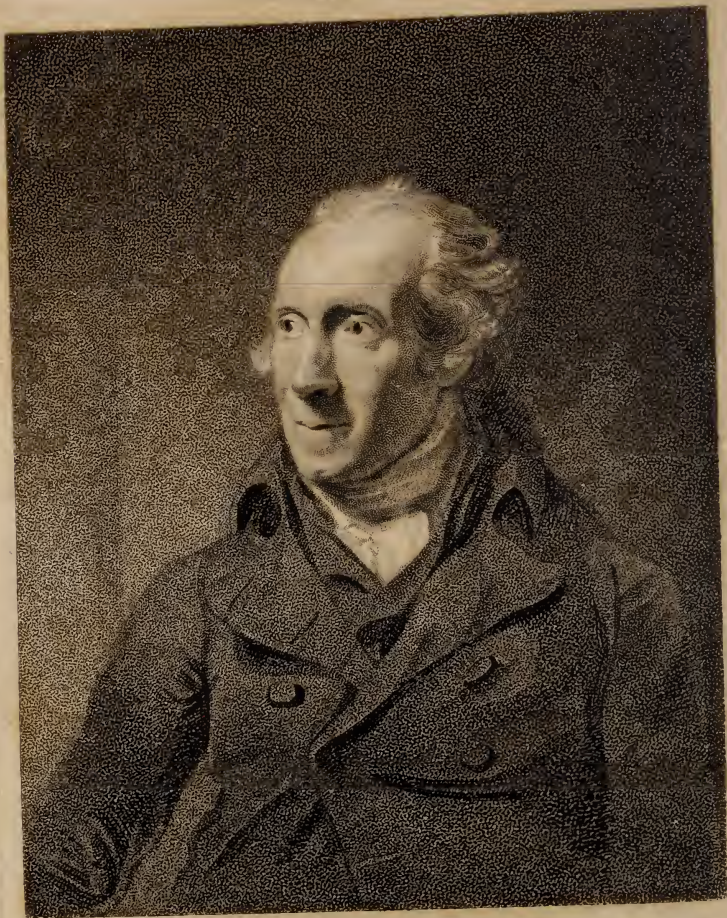
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James. Northcote Esq. R. A.

Engraved by Henry Meyer from an original Drawing by John Jackson.

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Robt. W. Weir

THE

L I F E

OF

SIR JOSHUA REYNOLDS,

LL.D. F.R.S. F.S.A. &c.

LATE PRESIDENT OF THE ROYAL ACADEMY.

COMPRISING

Original Anecdotes

OF MANY DISTINGUISHED PERSONS,

HIS CONTEMPORARIES;

AND A

BRIEF ANALYSIS OF HIS DISCOURSES.

BY

JAMES NORTHCOTE, ESQ. R.A.

THE SECOND EDITION, REVISED AND AUGMENTED.

IN TWO VOLUMES.



LONDON:

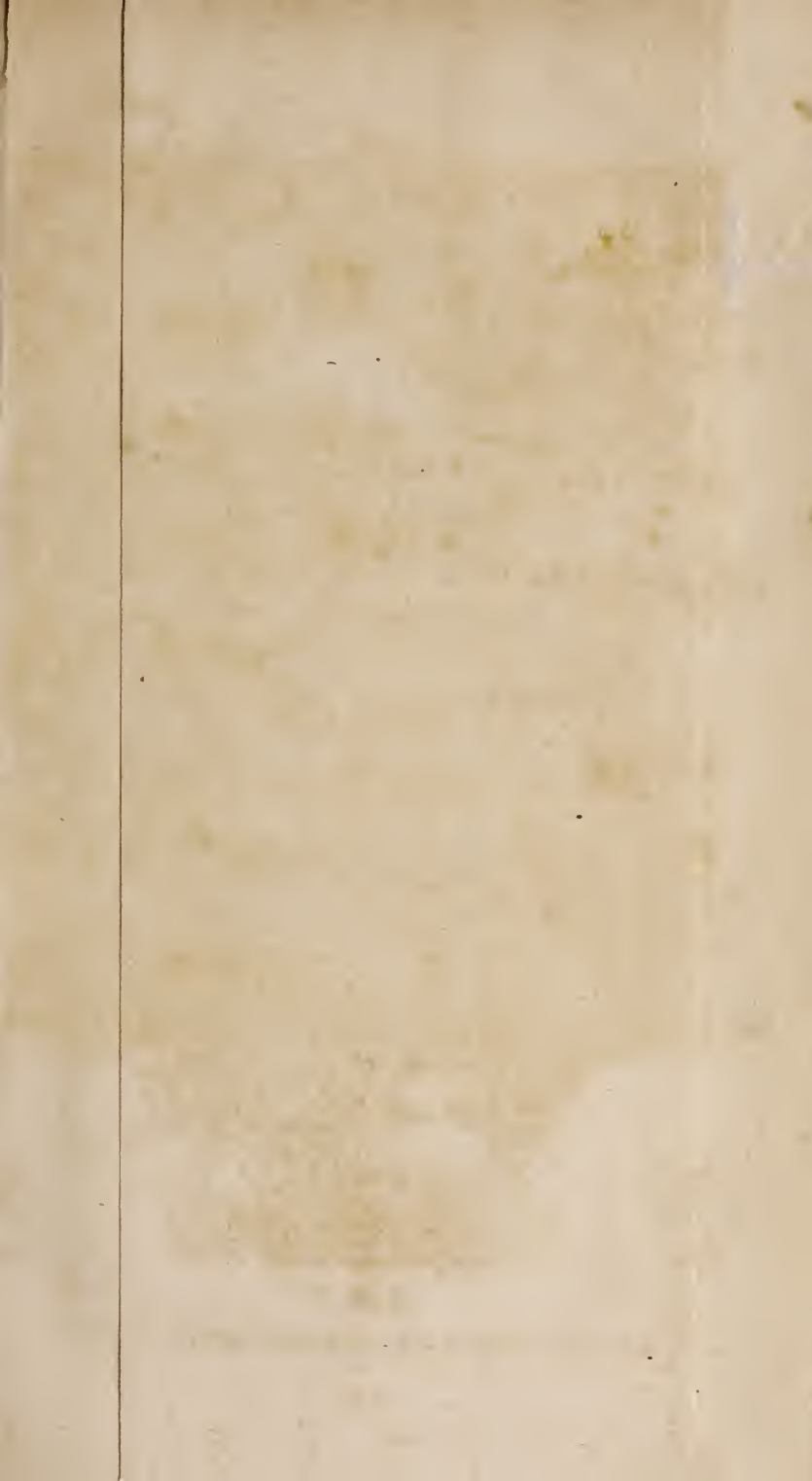
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To Mr. Northcote

London Sep. 3 1776

Dear Sir

I am very much obliged to you for your kind remembrance of me, and am very glad to hear of your great success, which you very well deserve, and I have no doubt but you will meet with the same encouragement when you come to settle in London which I hope you do not forget, Here is the place where you must think of setting up your shop after you have made a short trip (at least) to Italy which your success at Portsmouth and Plymouth will enable you to accomplish If I can ever be of any service to you you know you may command me

I am dear Sir

I beg when you write to Mr. Northcote you would thank her for her respect

Yours sincerely
Joshua Reynolds

L I F E
OF
SIR JOSHUA REYNOLDS.

1775.

ÆTAT. 51.

IN the year 1775, or about that time, a new arrangement took place in Sir Joshua's favorite society, the Literary Club, which now changed its original plan of supping once a week, into dinner parties once a fortnight, during the parliamentary sessions.

In this year also, he paid a compliment to another club, of which he had long been a member; this was a present of a portrait of himself for the dining-room of the Dilletanti Society, held in Pall Mall. It is a three quarter length, and he appears in his own hair, and in a loose robe: it has since been engraved in mezzotinto by James Watson.

As most of the efforts of Reynolds's pencil deserve notice, I must not omit that the Dilletanti Club are still further indebted to his abilities, he having enriched the room of this society with many other portraits of its members, particularly two pictures, each of which contains a group of figures, something in the manner of Paul Veronese.

The first has the portraits of the Duke of Leeds, Lord Dundas, Constantine John Lord Mulgrave, Lord Seaforth, the Honourable C. Greville, Charles Crowle, Esq., and the Right Honourable Sir Joseph Banks, Bart., and K. B.

The other picture represents the persons of Sir William Hamilton, Sir Watkyn Williams Wynne, Bart., Richard Thompson, Esq., Sir John Taylor, Payn Galway, Esq., John Smith, Esq., and Spencer Stanhope, Esq.

This Society of Dilletanti has the merit of being, in some measure, the harbinger of all the others for the Encouragement of the Arts ; for although it was at first supposed to have been established upon political principles yet, a few years at least before Sir Joshua's introduction to it, the members had at last the good sense to alter its original objects (if ever they were such) and to turn their thoughts to the formation of a public academy. For this purpose they held some communications with the Society of Artists, then recently established ; but some jealousies about the

government and regulation of the proposed institution prevented any union from taking place.

This, however, did not discourage the Dilletanti members, who, without any apparent ostentation, silently directed their exertions in favour of the arts, and it must be acknowledged were certainly of considerable service.

It was in this year, (1775,) that they were first enabled, by the accumulation of a fund set apart for the purpose, to support a student at the Italian Capital, whilst engaged in his professional acquirements; since which they have sent out several classical travellers, and patronized some valuable classical productions of the press on Grecian Antiquities.

In this same year Reynolds painted that portrait of his friend Dr. Johnson, which represents him as reading and near-sighted. This was very displeasing to Johnson, who, when he saw it, reproved Sir Joshua for painting him in that manner and attitude, saying, "It is not friendly to hand down to posterity the imperfections of any man." But, on the contrary, Sir Joshua himself esteemed it as a circumstance in nature to be remarked as characterizing the person represented, and therefore as giving additional value to the portrait.

Of this circumstance Mrs. Thrale says, "I observed that he (Johnson) would not be known by posterity, for his defects only, let Sir Joshua do his worst:" and when she adverted to Sir Joshua's

own picture painted with the ear trumpet, and done in this year for Mr. Thrale, she records Johnson to have answered, "He may paint himself as deaf as he chooses; but I will not be *blinking Sam* in the eyes of posterity."*

It is evident, however, that Sir Joshua meant not to hurt his feelings: indeed, his general politeness and attention at all times, both to the comfort and to the foibles of his friends, are particularly exemplified in this year, even by a tri-

* A collection of portraits of the friends of Mr. and Mrs. Thrale, painted by Sir Joshua, ornamented the dining-room of their house at Streatham. These were all sold by public auction, on May 10th, 1816. The following is a list of the persons and the prices they fetched at the sale.

	£.	s.	d.
Portrait of Sir Joshua himself	128	2	0
Dr. Johnson	378	0	0
Baretti	86	2	0
Lord Sandys	36	15	0
Dr. Goldsmith	133	7	0
Dr. Burney	84	0	0
Lord Westcote	43	1	0
Arthur Murphy	102	18	0
David Garrick	183	15	0
Sir Robert Chambers	84	0	0
Edmund Burke	252	0	0
Miss Owen	31	10	0
Mrs. Piozzi and her daughter, in one picture	81	18	0
Sum Total	1625	8	0

Sir Joshua's price, at the time these portraits were painted, was thirty-five guineas each.

fling occurrence, described by Mr. Boswell; when being engaged together with that gentleman and Dr. Johnson to dine with Mr. Cambridge at his Twickenham villa, Sir Joshua being anxious to fulfil an engagement at Richmond, early in the day, set off by himself on horseback, *leaving his coach* for his friends, who were not ready to accompany him, in consequence of Johnson's *tardiness*.

On the arrival of the latter, and on his entering Mr. Cambridge's library, he immediately ran to the shelves, when Sir Joshua whispered to Boswell—"He runs to the books as I do to the pictures; but I have the advantage, as I can see more of the one than he does of the other."

In the latter part of the year 1775, he sent his portrait, painted by himself, in the dress of his University honours, to be placed in the Gallery of illustrious Painters at Florence, in consequence of his having been chosen a member of the Imperial Academy of that city, and in compliance with its regulations, by which, in return for the honour conferred, the newly elected member is required to present his portrait, painted by his own hand: a circumstance which has produced the most curious and valuable collection of portraits of eminent painters in the world.

The following inscription in Sir Joshua's own hand is on the back of the portrait, painted on a pannel of mahogany:—

“JOSHUA REYNOLDS, EQUES AURATUS,
 ACADEMIÆ REGIÆ LONDONI PRÆSES,
 JURIS CIVILIS APUD OXONIENSES DOCTOR;
 REGIÆ SOCIETATIS, ANTIQUARIÆ
 LONDINI SOCIUS.
 HONORARIUS FLORENTINAS APUD ACADEMIÆ IMPERIALIS
 SOCIUS, NEC NON OPPIDI NATALIS, DICTI PLIMPTON
 COMITAT. DEVON.
 PRÆFECTUS JUSTITIARIUS MORUMQUE CENSOR.”

This portrait has since been engraved by C. Townly : and also for the Italian edition of his discourses ; there is a print by Carlo Faucci from the drawing by Franco Corsi.*

I recollect Mr. S——, on his return from Italy, calling on Sir Joshua to inform him that he had seen his portrait in the gallery at Florence, and that when the Florentines expressed to him their high admiration of the excellence of this picture, he told them it was impossible for them to form any judgement of the painter’s ample abilities from seeing that single head : but could they only

* Portraits of Sir Joshua are almost innumerable, a great number by his own hand ; but there is only one marble bust of him, which was executed by Cirachi, an Italian sculptor.

This Cirachi was a young man of some ability, but of a turbulent spirit, and had been driven from every country which he had visited. When he left England, he went to France, where he soon got himself guillotined for being concerned in a conspiracy formed against the life of Buonaparte, by means of a horrid contrivance, which the French named the Infernal Machine.

see some of his more extensive compositions, their admiration would then be infinitely greater, as this portrait gave a very inadequate idea of the variety of his powers. There were, at the time, three young painters before this picture, employed in copying it.

The picture of a little strawberry girl, with a kind of turban on her head, was painted about this time, and he considered it as one of his best works; observing, that no man ever could produce more than about half a dozen really original works in his life, "and that picture," he added, "is one of mine." The picture was exhibited and repeated by him several times; not so much for the sake of profit, as for that of improvement: for he always advised, as a good mode of study, that a painter should have two pictures in hand of precisely the same subject and design, and should work on them alternately; by which means, if chance produced a lucky hit, as it often does, then, instead of working upon the same piece, and perhaps by that means destroy that beauty which chance had given, he should go to the other and improve upon that. Then return again to the first picture, which he might work upon without any fear of obliterating the excellence which chance had given it, having transposed it to the other. Thus his desire of excellence enabled him to combat with every sort of difficulty or labour. I have heard him say, that while he was engaged in paint-

ing a picture he never knew when to quit it, or leave off; and it seemed to him as if he could be content to work upon it the whole remainder of his life, encouraged by the hope of improving it: but that, when it was once gone from him, and out of his house, he as earnestly hoped he should never see it again.

It was in this year also, that Sir Joshua painted an admirable portrait of Mrs. Hartley, in the character of a gipsey with an infant at her back, and began another of her in the character of Jane Shore. She was much admired when she appeared on the stage; but it was more on account of the extraordinary beauty of her person, than for her professional talents as an actress: her features were of an excellent form, and her complexion very fair and clear; but as she herself once observed to Sir Joshua, to use her own innocent expression, “her face was as freckled as a toad’s belly.”

I well recollect, likewise, an excellent portrait which he painted about this period, of a gentleman who had acquired in India more money than intellect. From this picture a print was to be taken. The Nabob went into the country, whence he wrote to Sir Joshua on the subject. In this letter he says, “my friends tell me of the Titian tint and the Guido air, of course you will add them; but I leave it to your judgement whether it should be done before or after the print is taken.” This letter I saw and read.

Numberless little anecdotes of this kind might be recorded ; I shall venture to mention a trifling one of the late Duchess of Cumberland, who sat to him about this time for her portrait, full length ; and I remember his being much diverted by her affected condescension, when she said, “ I come to your house to sit for my portrait, because I thought it would be much more convenient to you, as you would have all your materials about you and at hand.” He made her no answer, nor did he trouble himself to inform her, that there was no other way by which she could have had her portrait painted by him : indeed, the great Duke of Cumberland, and many others of the royal family, had not conceived it to be beneath their dignity to come to his house for the same purpose ; and formerly, as he observed, even the king himself, Charles the Second, always went to the houses of Lely and Kneller, whenever he sat for his portrait. However, great allowance must be made for those who are suddenly raised high beyond their expectation, as it not unfrequently has made even the wisest giddy.

Some portion of vanity indeed, ought to be pardoned in every one ; as the happiness of life so much depends upon it : for how could many of us endure our existence with any degree of patience if we saw ourselves as others see us ? Vanity has made many a happy mortal of such as, without it, might have been driven to the crime

of suicide. But kind, indulgent Nature, in the gift of this article is ever abundant, always bestowing it most amply where there is most need of its support; for which we ought to be infinitely thankful, as it fills up all our mental emptiness with delight, and the mind is consoled under all its insufficiencies, or even corporeal imperfections, which, by its assistance, oftentimes assume the form of beauty to our own apprehension. Self-opinion is Nature's stratagem to keep all the world quiet; and those who are so forlorn as to have no other flatterers, generally undertake that office for themselves, and perform its duties with more sincerity than those who do it for gain.

The admiration and fame that followed Reynolds, both as a man and an artist, could not fail to excite envy; instances of which have been recorded; in addition I may observe, that in the year 1775, Mr. Nath. Hone made an exhibition of several of his works, at a great room nearly opposite to Old Slaughter's Coffee-house, St. Martin's-lane. The collection contained between sixty and seventy paintings: among them were two which claimed particular notice. It seemed that the first idea of this exhibition owed its origin to pique, and something of envy in the artist towards Sir Joshua Reynolds, and this opinion is suggested by the following anecdotes.

In the exhibition of the Royal Academy, 1770, there was a picture painted by Mr. Hone, entitled

“Two Gentlemen in Masquerade:” they were represented as Capuchin Friars, regaling themselves with punch. When this picture was sent for admission, one of the personages was represented as squeezing a lemon, while the other was stirring the liquor with the crucifix at the end of his rosary: but the Council considered the latter circumstance as too indecorous to allow the picture’s being exhibited in that state; and the artist was requested to alter the crucifix. This request was complied with; but Mr. Hone was much offended, when, in truth, he ought rather to have been pleased with their having pointed out an impropriety, which might not have struck him upon the first idea of his picture. However, the desired alteration was made, and a ladle introduced, which he painted with a substance easily washed away; and the picture was again displayed at his own exhibition in its primitive state.

The other picture, which was the leading feature of his exhibition, represented an old man, half-length, the size of life, painted after the model from which Sir Joshua Reynolds had painted his Count Ugolino. This picture, which Mr. Hone called the Conjuror, was intended as a satire upon Sir Joshua’s method of composing his pictures. Yet Mr. Hone’s ridicule was not very apparent, for his figure represented little more than an old man, with a wand in his hand, performing incantations, by which a number of prints and sketches were made to float in the air, all of which

were representations of those originals from which Sir Joshua had taken the actions of the figures and groupes which he had introduced into some of his principal portraits.

As this picture, which did not display much vigour of mind, was evidently meant as an attack upon the President, the Council of the Royal Academy thought it prudent to exclude it from their exhibition, which again greatly displeased Mr. Hone; and he, like many others, disappointed in his private schemes, appealed to the public by an exhibition of his own.

Instead of trusting to my own temper in animadverting any further on such an attack on this great painter, I shall give a passage, and perhaps with more force, from the pen of a writer who, whatever his merits or demerits may be, cannot be accused of partiality for the subject of our biography. He says, speaking of Hone, "This gentleman should be almost exclusively arranged as a portrait painter, as he painted but two historical compositions. The first was a satire on monkish licentiousness; and the other was the exhibition of a *pictorial conjuror*, displaying his cleverness in the arts of deceiving the sight. This last performance was intended as an exposition of the manœuvring, in respect to attitudes, which was so attributable to Sir Joshua Reynolds. This vindictive effort was sent by its parent to the annual exhibition; but was rejected by the Academi-

cians with becoming scorn, as the issue of a little mind, and powers of fancy most scandalously directed:”—a keenness of rebuke which has well employed the pen of the author.

In addition I may observe, that Mr. Hone did not seem to recollect, that, whenever Sir Joshua availed himself of any of the merits of his predecessors in art, it was done in a manner that all must approve of, and such as the following circumstance may serve to explain, by showing, that he generally had in view the adding, to the first invention, much more than he borrowed from it.

Sir Joshua had in his collection a most excellent little sketch or study, by Rembrandt, of a Susanna going down the steps of the bath; this picture possessed, in the highest degree, the charms of colour, light and shade, and an exquisite expression, in the female figure, of silent, timid apprehension, in the attitude of listening; but, at the same time miserably deficient in every requisite towards beauty, grace, elevation of character, or elegance of form. I have heard Sir Joshua lament to see the defects of this picture, which possessed so many perfections, and I often heard him say, he would copy it in its excellencies, and attempt to make the figure of Susanna, as much as was in his power, what it ought to have been in the original—still preserving the fine expression.

Had he done this, such a combination of two great painters would have produced almost a perfect work.

“ Sir Joshua has been accused of plagiarism, for having borrowed attitudes from ancient masters. Not only candour, but criticism, must deny the force of this charge. When a single posture is imitated from an historic picture, and applied to a portrait in a different dress, and with new attributes, this is not plagiarism, but quotation ; and a quotation from a great author, with a novel application of the sense, has always been allowed to be an instance of parts and taste, and may have more merit than the original. When the sons of Jacob imposed on their father by a false coat of Joseph’s, saying, ‘ Know now whether this be thy son’s coat or not ? ’ they only asked a deceitful question : but that interrogation became wit, when Richard the First, on the Pope reclaiming a bishop whom the King had taken prisoner in battle, sent him the prelate’s coat of mail, and, in the words of Scripture, asked his holiness whether THAT was the coat of his son or not ?—Are not there humour and satire in Sir Joshua’s reducing Holbein’s swaggering and colossal haughtiness of Henry the Eighth, to the boyish jollity of Master Crewe ? Sir Joshua was not a plagiarist, but will beget a thousand. The exuberance of his invention will be the grammar of future painters of portraits.”—*Gentleman’s Magazine.*

In the course of this year, Sir Joshua had finished his well-known picture of "Venus chiding Cupid." It was done for Sir Brooke Boothby, who in 1794 sold it to Sir Thomas Bernard.

Boswell, about this time, records an observation of Dr. Johnson's, which was highly descriptive of Sir Joshua's placidity and evenness of disposition; not an overstrained stoicism, but that happy equability which proceeds both from mind and disposition. Whilst conversing on melancholy, Johnson said, that "some men, and very thinking men too, have not these vexing thoughts. Sir Joshua Reynolds is the same all the year round."

A character of the Honourable Mrs. P., written by Sir Joshua, was published in the newspapers of the day, and the printer had taken the liberty of altering a word in it, to make it, as he thought, much better, but which Sir Joshua thought made it much otherwise. In speaking of this afterwards to the late Caleb Whiteford, Sir Joshua complained of the absurd alteration, and said it had quite destroyed the simplicity of the whole; when Whiteford made the comparison of a pot of broth over the fire, into which a lump of soot falls from the chimney, and the whole mess is spoiled.

What the word was which the printer expunged I do not know; but the character here inserted is in its original form.

Character of the Honourable Mrs. P. by Sir Joshua Reynolds, December 21st, 1775.

“ The death of this Honourable Lady, was occasioned by a stroke of the palsy, which happened soon after her lying-in of a daughter ; of this she appeared to be recovering ; but receiving a second stroke, and soon after that a third, it put an end to the life of one of the most valuable of women.

“ Her amiable disposition, her softness and gentleness of manners, endeared her to every one that had the happiness of knowing her : her whole pleasure and ambition were centered in a consciousness of properly discharging all the duties of a wife, a mother, and a sister ; and she neither sought for, nor expected, fame out of her own house. As she made no ostentation of her virtues, she excited no envy ; but if there had existed so depraved a being as to wish to wound so fair a character, the most artful malignity must have searched in vain for a weak part. Her virtues were uniform, quiet and habitual ; they were not occasionally put on ; she wore them continually ; they seemed to grow to her and be a part of herself ; and it seemed to be impossible for her to lay them aside or be other than what she was. Her person was eminently beautiful ; but the expression of her countenance was far above all beauty that proceeds from regularity of features only. The gentleness and benevolence of her disposition were so naturally impressed on every look and

motion, that without any affected effort or assumed courtesy, she was sure to make every one her friend that had ever spoke to her, or even seen her.

“ In so exalted a character it is scarce worth mentioning her skill and exact judgement in the polite arts: she seemed to possess, by a kind of intuition, that propriety of taste and right thinking, which others but imperfectly acquire by long labour and application.”

At the time when I was a student at the Royal Academy, I was accidentally repeating to Sir Joshua the instructions on colouring I had heard there given by an eminent painter who then attended as visitor. Sir Joshua replied, that this painter was undoubtedly a very sensible man, but by no means a good colourist; adding, that there was not a man then on earth who had the least notion of colouring; “ we, all of us,” said he, “ have it equally to seek for and find out, as at present it is totally lost to the art.”

Strong objections were, certainly, often made to Sir Joshua's process or mode of colouring; but perhaps the best answer to all these is in the following anecdote.

One of these critics, who passed for a great patron of the art, was complaining strongly to a judicious friend of Sir Joshua's “ flying colours,” and expressing great regret at the circumstance, as it prevented him from having his picture painted

by the President. To all this his friend calmly replied, that he should reflect that any painter who merely wished to make his colours stand, had only to purchase them at the first colour shop he might come to ; but that it must be remembered that “ every picture of Sir Joshua’s was an experiment of art made by an ingenious man,—and that the *art advanced by such experiments, even where they failed.*”

In fine, what Gainsborough said of the President is strictly true : that in his opinion Sir Joshua’s pictures in their most decayed state were better than those of any other artist when in their best.

I once humbly endeavoured to persuade Sir Joshua to abandon those fleeting colours, lake and carmine, which it was his practice to use in painting the flesh, and to adopt vermilion in their stead as infinitely more durable ; although not, perhaps, so exactly true to nature as the former. I remember he looked on his hand and said “ I can see no vermilion in flesh.” I replied, “ but did not Sir Godfrey Kneller always use vermilion in his flesh colour ?” when Sir Joshua answered rather sharply, “ What signifies what a man used who could not colour. But you may use it if you will !”

It is to be observed, however, that Sir Joshua made use of vermilion himself in all his latter works ; finding by experience the ill effects of lake and carmine in his early productions.

If any other apology were necessary for Sir Joshua's mode of practice, it may be found in his own words, in one of the fragments, as preserved by Mr. Malone; there he says, "I was always willing to believe that my uncertainty of proceeding in my works, that is, my never being sure of my hand, and my frequent alterations, arose from a refined taste, which could not acquiesce in any thing short of a high degree of excellence. I had not an opportunity of being early initiated in the principles of *Colouring*: no man indeed could teach me. If I have never been settled with respect to colouring, let it at the same time be remembered, that my unsteadiness in this respect proceeded from an inordinate desire to possess every kind of excellence that I saw in the works of others, without considering that there are in colouring, as in style, excellencies which are incompatible with each other: however, this pursuit, or indeed any other similar pursuit, prevents the artist from being tired of his art. We all know how often those masters, who sought after colouring, changed their manner; whilst others, merely from not seeing various modes, acquiesced all their lives in that with which they set out. On the contrary, I tried every effect of colour, and by leaving out every colour in its turn, showed every colour that I could do without it. As I alternately left out every colour, I tried every new colour; and often, as is well known, failed. The

former practice, I am aware, may be compared by those whose first object is ridicule, to that of the poet mentioned in the Spectator, who in a poem of twenty-four books, contrived in each book to leave out a letter. But I was influenced by no such idle or foolish affectation. My fickleness in the mode of colouring arose from an eager desire to attain the highest excellence. This is the only merit I can assume to myself from my conduct in that respect."

Whilst thus speaking of Reynolds' practice, I shall add something further with respect to his theory. In particular, it was Sir Joshua's opinion, that if the vegetable colours (which are infinitely the most beautiful) were enclosed by varnish from the external atmosphere, they would not fade; however, what he proposed as the remedy was still worse than the disease, as the colour would still fade, added to which the varnish itself would crack.

Yet, from experience, he must have been well aware of the pernicious consequences of some of the nostrums (if I may so call them) that he often made use of, as I well remember, he was much displeased with a young painter, who showed him a picture in which experimental mixtures, composed of wax and varnishes of divers sorts, had been used; and afterwards, speaking of him to me, he said, "That boy will never do any good, if they do not take away from him all his gallipots of

varnish and foolish mixtures:" nor would he suffer me, during the whole time I resided in his house, to make use of any other materials than the common preparations of colour, just as we have them from the hands of the colourman; and all varnishes, and every kind of experiment, were strictly prohibited. Likewise all his own preparations of colour were most carefully concealed from my sight and knowledge, and perpetually locked secure in his drawers; thus never to be seen or known by any one but himself. In his own practice, however, he would venture on whatever experiment was recommended to him by any adviser that came in his way; and when he was at any time accused of having spoiled many of his portraits, by trying experiments upon them, he answered, that it was always his wish to have made these experiments on his fancy pictures, and if so, had they failed of success, the injury would have fallen only on himself, as he should have kept them on his hands; but that he was prevented from practising thus, by his being at the time perpetually employed in painting portraits; and therefore obliged to make his trials on those, as eagerness in the pursuit of excellence was, in him, uncontrollable.

It was of advantage to the old school of Italian painters, that they were under the necessity of making most of their colours themselves, or at least under the inspection of such as possessed

chymical knowledge, which excluded all possibility of those adulterations to which the moderns are exposed. The same also was the case in England, till the time of Sir Godfrey Kneller, who when he came to this country, brought over a servant with him, whose sole employment was to prepare all his colours and materials for his work. Kneller afterwards set him up as a colour-maker for artists; and this man's success, he being the first that kept a colour-shop in London, occasioned the practice of it as a trade.

Sir Joshua was ever careful about procuring unadulterated articles of every sort, and has often desired me to inform the colour-man, that he should not regard any price that might be demanded, provided the colours were genuine.

In his investigations also into the secrets used by the old painters, he was indefatigable. I remember once, in particular, a fine picture of Parmegiano, that I bought by his order at a sale, which he rubbed and scoured down to the very pannel on which it had been painted, so that at last nothing remained of the picture. Speaking to him of the extraordinary merits of Titian, I asked him, if he thought there ever would be in the world a superior in portrait-painting? he answered, that he believed there never would—that to procure a real fine picture by Titian, he would be content to sell every thing he possessed in the world, to raise the money for its purchase; adding,

with emphasis, " I would be content to ruin myself."

So desirous was Sir Joshua to arrive at excellence, that I have known him to work days and weeks on his fancy subjects, on which he could practice every experiment at pleasure, while numbers of his portraits remained unfinished, for the completion of which the most earnest solicitations were made; and when he also well knew, he should have received his price for them the moment they were sent home. Such was his delight in working on those fancy subjects that he was thus content to indulge it even at the expence of his immediate interest.

But it was not to experiments on his own colouring alone, that Sir Joshua trusted for gaining experience; for he actually tried experiments with several capital ancient paintings of the Venetian School, in order, if possible, to ascertain their grounds, to trace their process in laying on, and to analyze the chymical mixture of their various tints. This circumstance has been noticed by Mr. Malone, and is very just—an experiment too, conducted at an immense expence, for each painting thus investigated was, of course, totally destroyed.

Sir Joshua's early and continued success is, however, very well delineated by himself in one of those fragments already mentioned, where he says, " I considered myself as playing a great game, and,

instead of beginning to save money, I laid it out faster than I got it, in purchasing the best examples of art that could be procured; for I even borrowed money for this purpose. The possessing portraits by Titian, Vandyke, Rembrandt, &c., I considered as the best kind of wealth. By studying carefully the works of great masters, this advantage is obtained; we find that certain niceties of expression are capable of being executed, which otherwise we might suppose beyond the reach of art. This gives us a confidence in ourselves, and we are thus incited to endeavour at not only the same happiness of execution, but also at other congenial excellencies. Study, indeed, consists in learning to see nature, and may be called the art of using other men's minds. By this kind of contemplation and exercise we are taught to think in their way, and sometimes to attain their excellence. Thus, for instance, if I had never seen any of the works of Corregio, I should never perhaps have remarked in nature the expression which I find in one of his pieces; or if I had remarked it, I might have thought it too difficult or perhaps impossible, to be executed."

It must have been reasons such as these which could ever induce him to make a copy from any master, and only when he desired to possess himself of some peculiar excellence which another possessed before him; and when he did condescend to copy, its degree of correctness may be

judged of by an instance which I heard himself relate. The Chevalier Vanloo, the eminent portrait painter, being in England, in the year 1765, one day when he paid a visit to Sir Joshua, boasted of his great knowledge in the works of the different famous painters, saying he could not be deceived or imposed upon by a copy for an original. Sir Joshua then shewed him a head of an old woman which he had copied from one by Rembrandt, and without letting him into the secret asked his opinion upon it. The French painter, after a very careful inspection into it, said he could pronounce that it was undoubtedly an original picture by Rembrandt!

Of Sir Joshua's paintings, any accident that befel them seems of sufficient importance to be recorded. In a small room next to his own painting room, there were a great number of those portraits which had been rejected and were left upon his hands; round the sides of this room were shelves, on which were placed large heads, casts from the antique, and at a great height, for the room was lofty; and over these hung some old portraits by Lely and others. In this room as I was one day busily employed in painting a drape-ry to one of his portraits,* I suddenly heard a noise as if something had fallen, when looking up

* It was the portrait of Robinson, Archbishop of Armagh, with a hat on his head.

to the place, I saw that one of those pictures by Lely had dropt from its nail, and falling on the shelf, and thence forward, threw down two or three very large plaister heads. I had but a moment to get up in the corner of this little room, when the whole fell down on the floor, just where I had been at work, with a violence that would certainly have proved fatal to me, had I not got in time out of the way, as a moment would have been too late. The easel was knocked down, together with the picture on which I was at work, and driven with violence through five or six of those unfortunate rejected portraits, as they happened to be placed one before the other, whilst the floor was covered with the fragments of the broken plaister heads which were dashed to pieces by the fall. The great noise which this made alarmed even Sir Joshua, although deaf, and brought him into the room in a hurry to know what was the matter, when he stared with surprize to behold the wreck, but soon calmly smiled at a misfortune, which, indeed, did not require reparation.

On another morning, when Sir Joshua was quietly employed in his studies, he was much annoyed by a visit from a fire-man, who demanded five pounds for having brought the first fire-engine to his house, supposed to have been on fire. At first it was difficult to account for this mistake; but the truth is this, Sir Joshua in cleaning out a gallipot with spirits of turpentine had flung

some of it into the fire, which made a sudden blaze and appeared at the top of the chimney of his painting room ; for that being a very low chimney, a very small flame would soon appear at its top. The room was a separate building from the house ; but the parish regulations were absolute. He was obliged to pay the demand awarded by law.

As I have hinted at the subject of his draperies having been frequently executed by the hands of his scholars, it is but just to remark in this place, that the whole together of the picture, was at last his own, as the imitation of particular stuffs is not the work of genius, but is to be acquired easily by practice, and this was what his pupils could do by care and time more than he himself chose to bestow ; but his own slight and masterly work was still the best.

No painter like Sir Joshua knew how to make his drapery answer the purpose of enriching his figures, as may be seen in his excellent portrait of General Tarlton ; for though the figure is merely in a close jacket, yet, by making it unite, in a certain degree, with the flags in the back ground, it assumes a richness unexampled : others may have done the same by accident, in him it was principle.

Further, in respect to this part of the subject, I remember once when I was disposing the folds of drapery with great care on the lay figure, in order to paint from it into one of his pictures, he re-

marked that it would not make good drapery if set so artificially, and that whenever it did not fall into such folds as were agreeable, I should try to get it better, by taking the chance of another toss of the drapery stuff, and by that means I should get nature, which is always superior to art.

Besides the assistance which Sir Joshua had from his pupils, as usual with painters who are much occupied, he also employed Peter Toms to paint drapery for him, who was considered as the most perfect auxiliary in that department of painting that existed in his time. He had been a pupil of Hudson, was a Royal Academician, and son of Mr. Toms the engraver, and had practised some time in Ireland as a portrait painter.

Peter Toms was certainly a very good drapery painter, and, as I have observed, was frequently employed by Sir Joshua and others in that part of their pictures; but the manner of Toms's penciling did not exactly harmonize with the style of Sir Joshua's heads, as it was heavy and wanted freedom, so that his work had too much the appearance of having been done with a stamp, as the paper-hangings for rooms are executed. Sometimes he misunderstood Sir Joshua's intention in the picture; once in particular, in a full length portrait of a lady, instead of painting her in a rural habit, as Sir Joshua had designed, he had turned it into a dress of state. When Sir Joshua saw the picture, he expostulated with Toms, and told

him that it would not do by any means, and, in short, that he must paint it all over again. Toms refused, saying he had worked upon the drapery till his heart ached, and he could do no more to it; adding "you ought to be more explicit when you give the pictures into my hands." Sir Joshua said the drapery did not accord with the head. Toms answered, "that is because your heads are painted on a diminished scale." When Sir Joshua, mistaking him, in a great alarm cried out, "What! do you say that I paint in a little manner? did you say mine is a little manner?" "No," replied Toms, "but I say that your heads are less than the life."

Toms afterwards became very poor, and, it is said, died a violent death by his own hands.

In the year 1775, Sir Joshua finished the picture of Lady Cockburn with her three children in one group, and sent it to the Royal Academy. When it was first brought into the room, in order to its being exhibited, all the painters then present were so struck with its extraordinary splendour and excellence, that they testified their approbation of it by suddenly clapping with their hands.

I observed that at the commencement of this picture, the whole group of figures was so placed on the canvas, as to throw all the principal light too much on one side of the composition, which gave it a very awkward appearance, and created a great difficulty, as it required much consideration

to overcome the defect. After many trials, Sir Joshua at last, with true judicious management, illumined the vacant space in the canvas behind the figures, by an opening of most exquisitely coloured landscape in the back ground, which, together with a red curtain, and the gay plumage of a macaw, soon rendered it one of his most happy compositions. On this picture he has marked his name within the embroidered edge of the garment, in the same manner as on the portrait of Mrs. Siddons; and these two are the only pictures in which he has ever done so.

I recollect an anecdote, which helps to prove how difficult he found it ever to satisfy himself in his work, and how desirous he was to make it nearer perfection, even after the best judges were content: for at this time he had painted an excellent head of the Duchess of Leinster, sister to the Duke of Richmond; and when Edmund Burke saw the picture, he exclaimed, "What a beautiful head you have made of this lady! it is impossible to add any thing to its advantage." But Sir Joshua was not satisfied, and answered with much feeling, "It does not please me yet; there is a sweetness of expression in the original which I have not been able to give in the portrait, and therefore cannot think it finished."

Indeed, Sir Joshua was not at all liable to be misled, or even moved, by either praise or flattery from those persons in his presence. He has often

remarked that every man is surrounded by his own little circle of admirers, who, influenced by friendship or interest, &c., frequently bestow on him unqualified praise. “But if we desire to learn the real truth,” he added, “our view must be extended, and observation and enquiry made of what is thought and said by the world beyond this little and partial set of courtiers.”

The Clown in *Shakespeare's Twelfth Night* says, he is the worse for his friends, because they praise him, and make an ass of him; but his foes tell him plainly he is an ass. So that by his foes he profits in the knowledge of himself, and by his friends he is abused.

At the time that Gibbon's Roman History was published, it was the fashion to admire it exceedingly. Edmund Burke conversing with Sir Joshua upon that work, said, “he had just then been reading it, that he disliked the style of writing, that it was very affected, mere frippery and tinsel.”

I have mentioned these opinions of Burke's, particularly with respect to Gibbon's History; and in that opinion Burke was not singular; this eminent author, so admired by many, did not please all the judges of literature. Porson, the well-known Greek scholar, was lamenting to a friend that so large a portion of his own youthful time had been spent in acquiring the Greek language. “If I had a son,” said he, “to educate, I would make him study his native language, and

I would give him, as his task every morning, a sufficient portion of the pages of Gibbon for him to translate into plain English.”*

Sir Joshua was fond of introducing animals or birds occasionally into his compositions, and these he painted with great spirit and life. At one time he kept a very fine eagle which was chained to its perch in the back area of the house: when this bird died, I took the body and suspended it by strings so as to give it an action as if it was alive, with its wings spread, intending to paint a picture from it for myself. But when Sir Joshua saw me about it he seemed pleased, and told me to do it as well as I was able; and when I had finished

* Gibbon used to call frequently on Sir Joshua; and one morning, when I was in the adjoining room, I overheard the conversation, as those who spoke to Sir Joshua were obliged to speak rather in a loud voice on account of his deafness. I remember Gibbon related that a friend of his had, some little time before, bought an old casket, which contained many drawers, when, on making a very strict search into it, he had discovered one secret drawer, which had not been perceived by its latest possessors, and in this drawer he had the good luck to find several pieces of very old gold coin, amounting to five times the price he had given for the casket; but this was not all, he found, also curiously wrapt up in a piece of paper, a very old fashioned ring for the finger, and on the paper was written, “This is the very ring that Queen Elizabeth gave secretly to the Earl of Essex, and which ring he was to send to her at any time of his distress, as a token of his sincerity and attachment to the Queen.”

The sequel of this ring is well known, and that Essex did send it by a traitorous lady, who never delivered it to her Majesty.

the work to the best of my power, he took the picture and the bird into his own painting room, and in about a quarter of an hour gave it such touches of animation as made it truly fine, though executed with a bad light, for I remember it was late in the day when he did it, having been the night before at a masquerade, which had occasioned his remaining very long in bed that day.

In this year it was that Mr. Doughty was placed under the tuition of Sir Joshua. William Doughty was a native of Yorkshire, and recommended to the notice of Sir Joshua by the Rev. Mr. Mason. He remained about three years in the house of Sir Joshua as his pupil, and at that time, by the desire of Mr. Mason, and for him, painted the portrait of Gray the poet by description, (as Gray was dead,) and the help of an outline of his profile, which had been taken by lamp-light when he was living, and therefore must have been very exact; and this now remains as the only portrait of Gray. It has been engraved for the frontispiece of his works, and sculptured on his monument. Mr. Mason was the particular friend of Gray, and the editor of his works after his death, and also the patron of Doughty.

On Doughty leaving Sir Joshua he went to Ireland but did not succeed, although highly recommended by his master as well as his patron, and also possessing greater ability than his more fortunate rivals. He then returned to London exceed-

ingly dispirited, from whence he took shipping for Bengal in 1780; but before he left England had married one Margaret Joy, a servant girl in Sir Joshua's house; she also accompanied him when he left England. Having been captured by the combined squadrons of France and Spain, and carried to Lisbon, he there closed his mortal career. In 1778 he had exhibited a three-quarter length of his patron which possessed considerable merit; and he scraped some excellent mezzotinto portraits, among which, those of the Rev. Mr. Mason and Dr. Johnson were the most perfect. His widow continued in the determination of her voyage to India, where she had friends, but died just on her arrival at Bengal.

The following little circumstance, as it serves to shew the kind disposition of Sir Joshua, I may be allowed to mention, although it relates so much to my own concerns.

The latter end of the year 1775 was now arrived, when it only wanted a few months of five years, that I had been with him, and when I also approached the 29th year of my age; and I thought it high time for me to do something for myself at so late a period in the life of a pupil, having been prevented by many causes from beginning my studies as a painter in early youth. I therefore thought it proper to give Sir Joshua notice of my intentions some months before my departure; this however, was a task very disagreeable to me, and

I deferred it from day to day, but at last determined, and going to him one morning in the month of December, when he was alone in his painting room, I began by saying that at the end of May next it would be five years since I first came to his house. Sir Joshua, with a gentleness in his manner, said, that he thought that was full sufficient, and that I was now well able to do for myself. I then replied, that I was very sensible of the obligation I owed him, and that I would stay any time longer he should think proper, if I could be of any service to him. Sir Joshua said by no means, as I had already done him much service; I answered, that I feared I had not been of so much assistance to him as I wished, but that it was solely from want of power, and not inclination. Sir Joshua was so obliging as to say, that I had been very useful to him, more so than any scholar that had ever been with him: and he added, “I hope we shall assist each other as long as we live,” and that “if I would remain with him until the month of May he should be very much obliged to me, as I could be very useful to him;” I answered, that I intended it, and during that time wished to work as much as it was in my power for his service, and thus the conversation ended.

1776.*

ÆTAT. 52.

ON the 12th of May, 1776, I took my leave of Sir Joshua Reynolds, to take my chance in the world, and we parted with great cordiality; he

* In the beginning of the year 1776, Sir Joshua went to the Theatre to see Garrick perform the part of Sir John Brute, the last time he ever appeared in that character, and it was the general opinion that he never acted it better. So great was the crowd, that although I got into the theatre myself that night, yet it was with considerable difficulty.

In this year's Exhibition was a fine head of Garrick, by Sir Joshua, painted for Mrs. Thrale, and the last portrait of that great actor done by Reynolds.

Mr. Garrick had made a visit to Italy in the year 1763, and returned in 1765; and at the time he was in Rome, he sat for his portrait to that eminent Italian painter Pompeo Battoni, which picture, I am informed, is now in the possession of Sir Richard Kaye. At the same time, he also sat for his bust to Mr. Nollekens the sculptor, who was then at Rome, on his studies in that art.

Mr. Garrick's foible, the desire of praise, has often been remarked; and one day, when sitting to Nollekens, he was very inquisitive to know what was said of him by his countrymen at the English Coffee-house in that city: when Nollekens gravely answered, "Indeed, I heard somebody speaking very highly in your praise, as high as possible;" "Ah! ah!" said Garrick with great quickness, "Pray who was it—who was it spoke so highly in my praise?" "Why, it was yourself," answered Nollekens. "Ah, d——d vulgar! that's St. Giles's wit," replied Garrick.

Garrick's sitting room in his house in town, had a door so made, as to appear when shut, precisely like the other part of

said I was perfectly in the right in my intentions, and that he had been fully satisfied with my conduct whilst I had been with him ; also, that he had no idea that I should have staid with him so long, “ but now,” added Sir Joshua, “ to succeed in the art, you are to remember that something more is to be done than that which did formerly ; Kneller, Lely, and Hudson, will not do now.” I was rather surprized to hear him join the former two names with that of Hudson, who was so evidently their inferior as to be out of all comparison.

It was impossible to quit such a residence as Sir Joshua’s without reluctance, a house in which I had spent so many happy hours, and although perfectly satisfied in my own mind that what I did in this respect was right, and that it was high time for me to be acting for myself on the stage of life, yet to leave that place, which was the constant resort of all the eminent in every valuable quality, without an inward regret, was not in my power. It is a melancholy reflection even at this moment, when one considers the ravages a few

the room, and of course not easily to be found but by those who had been used to it. One day a tailor came to him on business, which being finished, the tailor bowing and intending to leave the room was unable to find the door, searching all round the room in vain, and affording much amusement to Garrick, whom I heard relate this circumstance myself, when he was in Sir Joshua’s painting room, which had a door of a similar kind.

short years have made in that unparalleled society which shone at his table, now all gone!

As this event was a considerable era in my life when I was no longer to be an inmate as one of the family of Sir Joshua Reynolds, I may be suffered to make a pause, and indulge my thoughts in the pleasing recollection of many little circumstances and matters of observation which occurred during the space of five years; therefore as a kind of summing up, and closing of this period, I shall record in this place several matters, perhaps pleasing only to myself, from the lively remembrance they raise in my mind of those happy years of my life.

Of the political sentiments of Sir Joshua at that time I may merely state, that during the contest between England and America, so strongly was it the opinion of many persons that we should conquer them in the end, that Sir Joshua, who thought the contrary, actually received five guineas each from several gentlemen under a promise to pay them in return one thousand pounds if ever he painted the portrait of General Washington in England, and which he was not to refuse to do in case the General should be brought to him to that intent.

One day at dinner with Sir Joshua and his sister, Miss Reynolds, I remarked to her that I had never seen any picture by Jervas, which was rather extraordinary, as he was a fashionable pain-

ter in his day; she said, "Nor I neither, I wonder how that should be. I do not know that I ever saw one;" then addressing Sir Joshua, she said, "Brother, how happens it that we never meet with any pictures by Jervas the painter?" when he answered very briskly, "because they are all up in the garret."

In so saying, he alluded to the destiny of bad portraits, which, in the succeeding generation, are thus treated with neglect and contempt.

Miss Black was at this time an eminent teacher of crayon painting amongst the ladies of quality, who frequently brought their performances for Sir Joshua's inspection; and I have heard him observe of Miss Black's scholars, that their first essays were better than their last.

Implying that Miss Black's interference in the work diminished as her scholars advanced.

Another anecdote (perhaps curious to painters,) Sir Joshua used to relate, which he heard from Mr. Jonathan Richardson the portrait painter.

When Richardson was a very young man, in the course of his practice he painted the portrait of a very old lady, who, in conversation at the time of her sitting to him, happened to mention, that when she was a girl about sixteen years of age, she sat to Vandyke for her portrait. This immediately raised the curiosity of Richardson, who asked an hundred questions, many of them unimportant: however the circumstance which seemed

to him as a painter, to be of the most consequence in the information he gained was this: she said, she well remembered, that, at the time when she sat to Vandyke, for her portrait, and saw his pictures in his gallery, they appeared to have a white and raw look, in comparison with the mellow and rich hue which we now see in them, and which time alone must have given to them, adding much to their excellence.

Of the truth of this anecdote, I am well convinced from my own experience: as before I came to London, I had seen no others of Sir Joshua's paintings than those which had been mellowed by a considerable space of time, which had given them a richness of hue; so, that when I first saw his gallery in London, I well recollect my surprize and disappointment at the sight of the raw, crude, fresh appearance of his new pictures, which from these causes alone, seemed to me by no means equal to those I had before seen and so much admired.

Upon one occasion, Mr. Edmund Burke, when in conversation with Sir Joshua, remarked to him the peculiar advantages which certain situations gave to those who chose to make use of them; "for instance, you, Sir Joshua, from your character and the opportunities you have by your profession of being so much in private with persons of the highest rank and power, at moments, also, when they are at leisure and in good humour,

might obtain favours from them which would give you a patronage almost equal to that of a prime minister."

"There is some truth in what you say," answered Sir Joshua, "but how could I presume to ask favours from those to whom I became known only by my obligations to them?"

One instance, however, I may record, wherein he prudently deviated from his general rule of conduct in behalf of a young clergyman, his near relative, for whom he was induced to ask a favour. It was from the Marquis, then Viscount Townshend, who was appointed Lord-lieutenant of Ireland. Sir Joshua by a letter to Lord Townshend, then in London, requested from him the gift of any living he might think proper to bestow on this young man, who at that time was unprovided for. The very same morning on which Lord Townshend received Sir Joshua's letter, he came instantly to him, and, in the most gracious manner, assured him that he felt great pleasure in the opportunity Sir Joshua had put in his power of testifying his friendship for him, and that he should most certainly remember him on the first occasion that might offer to serve him. Accordingly, very shortly after, he bestowed on this young clergyman a deanery in Ireland.

The earnest desire which Sir Joshua had to render his pictures perfect to the utmost of his ability, and in each succeeding instance to surpass the

former, occasioned his frequently making them inferior to what they had been in the course of the process ; and when it was observed to him, “ That probably he never had sent out to the world any one of his paintings in as perfect a state as it had been,” he answered, that he believed the remark was very just ; but that, notwithstanding, he certainly gained ground by it on the whole, and improved himself by the experiment : adding, “ If you are not bold enough to run the risk of losing, you can never hope to gain.”

With the same ardent wish of advancing himself in his art, I have heard him say, that whenever a new sitter came to him for a portrait, he always began it with a full determination to make it the best picture he had ever painted ; neither would he allow it to be an excuse for his failure to say, “ The subject was a bad one for a picture ;” there was always nature, he would observe, which, if well treated, was fully sufficient for the purpose.

In the short fragment inserted in his Memoir by Mr. Malone, he expresses himself thus, much to the same purport : “ My success and continual improvement in my art, (if I may be allowed that expression) may be ascribed, in a good measure, to a principle which I will boldly recommend to imitation ; I mean a principle of honesty : which, in this, as in all other instances, is, according to the vulgar proverb, certainly the best policy. I always endeavoured to do my best. Great or vul-

gar, good subjects or bad, all had nature ; by the exact representation of which, or even by the endeavour to give such a representation, the painter cannot but improve in his art."

It was one of Sir Joshua's favorite maxims, that all the gestures of children are graceful, and that the reign of distortion and unnatural attitude, commences with the introduction of the dancing master. He delighted much in marking the dawning traits of the youthful mind, and the actions and bodily movements even of infants ; and it was by these means that he acquired the ability which enabled him to pourtray children with such exquisite happiness, truth, and variety. A circumstance, as related by himself, occurs to my remembrance, which may serve to prove the truth of the above observation, as well as to shew how watchful his mind was to catch instruction wherever it was to be gained.

Sir Joshua being in company with a party of ladies and gentlemen, who were viewing a nobleman's house, they passed through a gallery of portraits, when a little girl, who belonged to one of the party, attracted the particular attention of Sir Joshua by her vivacity and the sensible drollery of her observations ; for whenever the company made a stand, to look at each portrait in particular, the child, unconscious of being observed by any one, imitated, by her actions, the air of the head, and sometimes awkward effect of the ill disposed

position of the limbs in each picture ; and this she did with so much innocence and true feeling, that it was the most just and incontrovertible criticism that could be made on the picture.

We may perceive, by this instance, that those parts of the art which are its essentials, and the most difficult to accomplish with tolerable success, namely, grace, ease of attitude, and expression, are qualities which lie open to the knowledge and judgement of the most simple and untaught persons, in a much greater degree than to the half-learned connoisseur.

Sir Joshua, with true genius, disdained not to draw instruction either from the rudest teachers or from infantine simplicity ; in confirmation of which, in one of his manuscript fragments, I find the following observations, which well correspond with the above.

“ I cannot but think that Appelles’s method of exposing his pictures for public criticism was a very good one. I do not know why the judgement of the vulgar on the mechanical parts of painting should not be as good as any whatever : for instance, as to whether such or such a part be natural or not. If one of those persons should ask why half the face is black, or why there is such a spot of black, or snuff, as they will call it, under the nose, I should conclude from thence that the shadows are thick, or dirtily painted, or that the shadow under the nose was too much resembling

snuff, when, if those shadows had exactly resembled the transparency and colour of nature, they would have no more been taken notice of than the shadow in nature itself. Yet I have seen painters lift up their eyes at such observations, and wrapping themselves up in their own conceit, complain of the want of connoissance in the world in order to value their works as they deserve, never suspecting the fault to be wholly in themselves.

“ A painter should nevertheless take care not to condescend too far, and sacrifice his taste to the judgement of the multitude ; few of those are capable of giving a good judgement in regard to the delicacy of expression.”

Of his sentiments on other subjects unconnected with the practice of art, there are many that come to my recollection ; in particular, when I related to him that old Mr. James Ferguson, the astronomer, was offered the Fellowship of the Royal Society, without solicitation or expense, yet when informed of it, asked “ what he should gain by it ? ” and the answer was, that it was an honour conferred on him gratuitously, for which others were very willing to pay ; “ Ah,” said Mr. Ferguson, “ I do not want honour, I want bread ! ” Sir Joshua observed, that the obtaining of honours was the means of obtaining bread.

Sir Joshua would not willingly admit of any excuse by way of palliating a bad performance.

Once, on my shewing a landscape to him, painted by a friend of mine, an amateur in the art, he said it was very badly done, and asked me if I did not think the same. When I endeavoured to make some apology for my friend, by saying he had not had the advantage of instruction, he answered rather quickly, "What signifies that? In this manner you may excuse any thing, however bad it may be."

In one of his manuscripts, speaking of Michael Angelo, he says, "For such a superior genius, while wrapt in wonder and amazement at his own ideas, to be surly, even to his superiors is excusable; but for such as degrade human nature, and transform them in their representations into monkeys, to imitate this peevishness, and give themselves such airs, is the very excess of the ridiculous."

He observes, "that any miserable artist who had failed in his profession as a painter, from want of ability, and had afterwards, from necessity, turned picture dealer, was always considered, by pretended connoisseurs, as well as by a great part of the world, as a much better judge of the art than the most successful artist."

He again remarks, that "it is very possible for a whole nation to have a peculiarity of manners which shall be condemned by their neighbours, so that what is politeness in one country shall be deemed foppery in another. Sir Godfrey Kneller

and Sir Peter Lely, who were mannerists and admired in England, are despised in France and Italy; but Vandyke's pictures, which are truth itself, and the result of a close attention to nature, are admired by the whole world."

I once observed to Sir Joshua, that a certain insignificant person of our acquaintance had frequent assemblies at his house, which were attended by persons of the very highest rank, and that it was surprising how he could induce them to come to him; when Sir Joshua, who knew the world much better than I ever shall, set me right by saying, "If you will but provide suitable entertainment for them, you may easily have for your visitors whoever you choose to invite, from the highest to the lowest."

The many trifles which I have here related, I fear make me liable to the censure of my judicious reader, and most of those trifles probably had much better have been omitted; but as it is all truth, and several of the circumstances are worth preserving, I was, as I have before observed more than once, unwilling to make myself the judge, by a selection, and, therefore, have risked the danger of giving too many, lest I should have fallen into the worse fault of giving too few: and I have also an apology for what I have done, and which I here give in the very words of that great prelate, Secker, in his tenth sermon, where he has the following passage, "Rabbi David Kimchi, a noted Jewish

commentator, who lived about five hundred years ago, explains that passage in the first psalm, ‘*His leaf also shall not wither,*’ from Rabbins yet older than himself, thus : that *even the idle talk* (so he expresses it,) *of a good man ought to be regarded;* the most superfluous things, he saith, are always of some value.”

I shall, therefore, boldly proceed on such authority, even if my good reader be fatigued by my relating those minute and petty matters, but which have dwelt in my memory from the time I left the house of Sir Joshua, and which, probably, appear more important to my mind, as I have before observed, than they can to another, from their connection with that period of my youth.

It was an opinion of his, that as it is impossible for us to do hurt to the dead, therefore we may hold up their imperfections to view, as an example for others to avoid the like, and by this means to do good to the living. If we owe regard (says Johnson) to the memory of the dead, there is yet more respect to be paid to knowledge, to virtue, and to truth.

On speaking to him concerning a friend of his, who was dying of a lingering disease, for which he was sensible there was no possible cure, it was remarked of this person, that his situation seemed to excite in him the utmost degree of impatience and terror, and that he appeared like a criminal under sentence of death. Sir Joshua observed,

“ That we are all under sentence of death ; but that his warrant was signed.”

It was an observation of his, that it had a bad tendency to look at works worse than our own, as it might make us too easily content with our own productions, or else deaden our ardor for the art itself. The exact reverse to this is the consequence from viewing fine pictures.

It was his opinion, that it never did a painter much credit to have no other pictures than his own in a collection, as it became tiresome to the spectator from the want of variety, and also, because the painter's peculiar defects became more conspicuous by seeing them so often repeated.

It may be remarked how well his own works stood this trial, when collected together after his death, and exhibited in Pall-Mall in 1813.

Sir Joshua used to say, that he could instruct any boy that chance should throw in his way, to be able in half a year to paint a likeness in a portrait ; but to give a just expression and true character to the portrait was infinitely difficult and rare to be seen, and when done was that which proved the great master : and of Velasquez the celebrated Spanish painter, of whose great powers he thought so favorably, he said, “ What we are all attempting to do with great labour, he does at once.”

A friend of his was relating to him the ill success of an indifferent painter in the country, who,

by his caricature likenesses, enraged his sitters, and more especially the ladies, as much as if he had really made them, in their own persons, as ugly as they were in their portraits, and this he observed seemed to be carrying their anger too far.

“Why you know,” said Sir Joshua, “he has given it under his hand that they are so.”

A very bad picture, which by the possessor was thought to be of great value, was offered to him for his purchase, and the price demanded for it, most absurdly, was two hundred guineas; when he answered with some degree of impatience, “Why not two thousand!”

One day, at dinner time, Sir Joshua brought into the parlour, in his hand, a portrait of Rubens. When Miss Reynolds, with some eagerness demanded if it was an original by Rubens, Sir Joshua asked why she should doubt it? adding “I suppose you thought that a real Rubens could not come into the house with so little noise.”

In conversation once with Sir Joshua, he said to me in the way of advice, that “He who would arrive at eminence in his profession should confine his whole attention to that alone, and not do as many very sensible men have done, who spend their time in acquiring a smattering and general kind of knowledge of every science, by which their powers became so much divided, that they were not masters of any one.” I said hastily, “That is exactly my own father.” He replied, “And it was mine also.”

A young painter who was showing his performance to him in order to have his opinion and instruction upon it, when the faults were pointed out to him, excused himself by saying he had committed the error by following the dictates of his employer whom he wished to please. Sir Joshua would not allow such a reason to be any palliation of his faults, adding, "It is you who are to understand your own business, and not your employer." Yet he would never willingly offer advice, unless he perceived the mind of the person, who asked it, was earnestly engaged on the subject; otherwise, he said it was lost labour, and that instruction went in at one ear and out at the other.

Sir Joshua used to say, that it was a bad custom to talk of or even divulge the subject of your intended work, as it had the tendency to lessen your ardor in the execution of it.

The following observations by Sir Joshua Reynolds, were the result of many conversations, or from fragments written by himself.

"It is not to be supposed that those works, which have stood the test of the wisest and severest ages, have in reality nothing of intrinsic value, but owe the long possessing of fame to a hit of fortune, to the humour or tame obsequiousness of a long succession of admirers. Such an opinion is too bold an attempt upon the reason of mankind, and he that holds it must either be possessed of divine

wisdom, or be much of a fool. By invincible arguments, to demonstrate the mistakes of the learned world in all its errors which have continued for ages, requires a soul of divine perspicuity, (Newton's was such,) clear from those incumbrances that have misguided and obscured the perceptions of other mortals. To oppose a single capricious opinion to the collected force of long established authority, looks like some hero in a play, or the knight errant in a romance, who with his two arms alone routs whole thousands."

"Raffaelle did not think that pictures ought to be considered as merely ornamental furniture. If that alone had been the intent and end of painting, how many painters would be his superiors! He intended to move the passions, to inspire the spectators with the love of virtue and of noble actions; consequently his pictures are not to be slightly passed over, but must be dwelt upon; and the longer this is done, the deeper the impression will be made."

"When a grace is said to be snatched beyond, or contrary to the rules of art, it is nevertheless a truth; for it may be contrary to one rule, but subservient to another more comprehensive. For instance, Raffaelle, in the figure of Christ in the Transfiguration, has made such lines as are contrary to the general rules; but they are agreeable to a more extensive rule; that of being natural, simple, unaffected, and of more energy. It breaks, indeed,

through one rule to approach nearer to another of greater consequence.”

“ It is possible we should have seen greater variety of thoughts, and more extraordinary conceptions in the works of painters, if they were left to themselves, and did not follow each other like sheep.”

“ Too much attention to other men’s thoughts, by filling the mind, extinguishes the natural power, like too much fuel on fire.”

“ The human mind cannot at once recollect all the rules of art, or if it could, would still not know how to apply them without practice; it must be by repeated acts that the habit is settled of doing right without reflecting on rules.”

“ A painter, who vaunted himself upon the great learning and knowledge he had in his profession, produced a picture which he boasted was painted according to the severity of the rules of his art. The connoisseurs flocked to see it; and when, contrary to his expectations, they remained silent, he is astonished at people’s blindness and want of taste, pities their ignorance, and complains how little merit is regarded in those days. “ I do not wonder at all,” says a friend to whom he had made his moan, “ at the ill success of your piece, in which you boast to have followed the rigor of the rules of art; when you have neglected the first and most essential of them, which is to have feeling or genius for the art.”

“ When a poet would represent a man inflamed by passion, to put a simile in his mouth he knows would be contrary to the rules of poetry, because it would be unnatural. But, suppose the poet truly felt the passion he would represent at the time he was writing upon it, (which most certainly Shakespeare did,) he would never look about for a simile, it would inevitably cause the passion to languish. Thus we see that rules are founded on nature, consequently a poet who felt his subject properly would have very little occasion for rules.”

“ Homer’s Iliad was first written, then Aristotle drew his rules of an epic poem.”

“ Genius begins where rules end. When a painter is master of every rule that is already found out, let one rule more be added ; that is, not to be confined by any, but to think for himself.” *Hippocrates’ Advice.*

“ Squareness has grandeur ; it gives firmness to the forms : a serpentine line, in comparison, appears feeble and tottering.”

“ A firm walk or step is grand. A light step may be genteel.”

“ A straight avenue is grand ; a serpentine line elegant.”

“ One class alone cannot possess all excellencies.”

“ Fashion sometimes adopts one, sometimes the other.”

“Perfection partakes equally of all.”

“In passing our judgement, we are to consider the class to which the subject belongs.”

“In all these cases, as you approach the one kind of excellence you retreat from the other; you cannot join the two together without weakening the effect of each.”

“The great delight of mankind is to strike with surprise.”

“All games of recreation are an imitation of enmity.”

“Portraits, as well as written characters of men, should be decidedly marked, otherwise they will be insipid.”

“The younger pupils are best taught by those who are in a small degree advanced in knowledge above themselves, and from that cause proceeds the peculiar advantage of studying in academies.”

“In painting prefer truth before freedom of hand.”

“Grandeur is composed of straight lines.”

“Genteelness and elegance of serpentine lines.”

“A firm and determined manner is grand, but not elegant.”

“Genteelness is not being crowded, especially if there is a fullness at the same time.”

“Air is a single moment of any action.”

“Simplicity is an exact medium between too little and too much.”

“Grace is the medium of motion, beauty is the medium of form, and genteelness the medium of the fashion.”

“Beauty consists in a fitness to the end proposed”

“Ornament is the medium between wanting what is necessary, and being over-furnished,”

“Ornament ought to arise only from the right ordering of things. *Orno* is Latin for ‘to furnish.’”

“Manner in painting is like peculiarity of behaviour; though it may please a few, the bulk of mankind will condemn it.”

“The only wages a real genius thinks of in his labour, is the praise of impartial judges.”

“A good portrait painter may not be capable of painting history.”

“But an historical painter for certain has the ability to paint portrait.”

“The great principle of being happy in this world is not to regard or be affected with small things.”

“No man relishes an evening walk like him whose mind has been employed the whole preceding day.”

“Polite behaviour and a refined address, like good pictures, make the least show to ordinary eyes.”

“Humility is not to despise any thing, especially mankind.”

“Magnanimity is not to be disturbed at any thing.”

“A man is a pedant who, having been brought up among books, is able to talk of nothing else. The same of a soldier, lawyer, painter, &c.”

“Natural, is that which is according to the common course of things. An ugly face is not according to the common course of things, consequently an ugly face is an unnatural face.”

“The character of a nation is perhaps more strongly marked by their taste in painting, than in any other pursuit, although more considerable; as you may easier find which way the wind sits by throwing up a straw in the air than any heavier substance.”

“Rules are very necessary to, but will never make, a painter.

“They should be used as servants, and subject to us, not we to them.”

“There are some landscape painters, who the more they work on their trees, render them the less like the objects of their imitation.”

“Real greatness is that which presents less by far to the sense than to the imagination.”

“Greatness causes admiration, oftentimes astonishment.”

“There is a certain majesty in simplicity, which is far above all the quaintness of wit.” *Pope.*

“A certain degree of pride, enough to take off any timourousness, and enable him to depend on the force of his own genius, is a necessary qualification in a painter.”*

“True sublimity consists more in the natural and simple than in the pompous and swelling.”

* Our own opinion that we shall succeed, is that often which gives us success in the most difficult undertakings.

“The very foundation of the art of painting is invention; and he who most excels in that high quality must be allowed to be the greatest painter, in what degree soever he may be surpassed by others in the more inferior branches of the art.”

“The painter who knows his profession from principles, may apply them alike to any branch of the art, and succeed in it.”

“Every painter has some favourite branch of the art which he looks for in a picture; and in proportion as that part is well or ill executed, he pronounces his opinion upon the whole. One artist looks for colouring, another for drawing, another for handling; an independent spectator looks for expression.”

“Never give the least touch with your pencil till you have present in your mind a perfect idea of your future work.”

“Paint at the greatest distance possible from your sitter, and place the picture near to the sitter, or sometimes under him, so as to see both together.”

“In beautiful faces keep the whole circumference about the eye in a mezzotinto, as seen in the works of Guido and the best of Carlo Maratti.”*

“Look at the object from which you are painting, with your eye-lids half closed, which gives breadth to the object, and subdues all the little unimportant parts.”

* An expression of modesty softens the eye, and improves the beauty of the face while it discovers that of the mind.

“The difference between the Roman and the Venetian manner of painting their draperies is, that the former has always broad lights ; the latter only catches of light, and consequently more natural, more silky, but not so noble.”

“It surprises the ignorant in art when they hear it said, that such drapery in a picture as seems to them not to be an exact imitation of individual nature, is yet better than that which is so natural, that (to use their own words,) it looks as if you could take it up. I would ask such persons, whether in an heroic poem (to that style in painting I allude,) they look upon those expressions which are the most familiar to be the best ? Expressions, however proper of themselves, yet, by being too often in the mouths of the vulgar, contract a meanness. It is the same in respect to the accompaniments in a picture ; therefore the painter carefully avoids introducing into his pictures those utensils which are familiar, and seen by us every day, even so to drapery : or when forced to adopt them, then they are drawn after a form of his own composing, or else taken from antique models. He therefore objects to such drapery as would be called natural ; he seeks only the order of the folds, that they are large, and of a noble cast ; that they mark out the parts they cover, and flow sweetly into each other, and conduct the eye with satisfaction from one fold to another, without offensive crossings or affected contrasts.”

“ The great painter, as well as the poet, founds his work on general nature : but in the style of Watteau, Lancret, &c. ; on the contrary, the more natural the drapery is represented the better it is.”

“ Raffaelle and Rembrandt both imitated nature ; with this difference, that the first showed what she had that was most beautiful, noble, and simple : the other took her without selection, and without exactness. It is true we see nature in his figures, but we are sorry to say it is nature.”

“ It is necessary that a painter should have an elevated and sublime comprehension of things ; which is to be acquired by being intimately acquainted with the noblest characters of the ancients.”

“ There is a bombast in painting as well as in poetry, and it is divided from the true sublime by a thin partition. Hence it often happens that when the painter thinks he has given his figure the air of a hero, or the poet made him, as he conceives, speak like one, they are no more the true representations of either, than Ancient Pistol, or the player, who, in order to act the great hero, endeavoured to look as big as he could, and strutted about the stage till he was hissed off by his judicious audience.”

“ Some painters imagine the sublime to consist in overstrained and forced attitudes ; thus quitting as much as possible every easy and natural air and action.”

“ Others, on the contrary, by imitating nature too closely, and without choice, have made their figures appear mean and inelegant. The first manner is the most prevalent, and indeed by much the easiest attained ; as the other extreme requires some attention to nature.”

“ Those pompous airs, however, are more imposing, and make a greater show, and strike the eye of a raw and ignorant beholder far more than the simple natural manner.”

“ The same principle is applicable also to colouring : as colours, raw and gaudy, give most delight to the eye of the vulgar.”

“ In painting, as in architecture, the very essence and perfection of the grand style is simplicity ; not to be too much encumbered with little ornaments, which produce no effect at a distance, but only make a confused heap of littlenesses.”

“ On the contrary, a picture should be composed of few and large parts, which fill the eye distinctly.”

“ Large parts and few are the foundation of a grand gusto.”

“ A simplicity of taste may descend into clownishness and poverty of invention ; so also a richness and redundancy of invention may run into wildness, a romantic kind of richness and magnificence, like the descriptions to be met with only in romances : the consequence of which is, that you behold them without the least emotion.”

“ Economy and frugality have a relationship to taste, in not being too prodigal of rich ornaments or gay draperies.”

“ Endeavour to look at the subject or sitter from which you are painting as if it was a picture ; this will in some degree render it more easy to be copied.”

“ In painting consider the object before you, whatever it may be, as more made out by light and shadow than by its lines.”

“ When a painter becomes fond of talking, he had better put a padlock on his mouth, because those who can be admired for what they say will have less desire to be admired for what they can do ; and as the former is so much easier performed with applause than the latter, it will more frequently be adopted : it being the nature of mankind to get as much commendation as they can acquire, and by the easiest means.”

Of talkers he adds, “ They read, study, and look at pictures, with no other view than of qualifying themselves for talking on the subject ; their knowledge goes no further : so that an ingenious man may sometimes by chance hear a profitable sentence from them, though it really is of no kind of service to themselves. They are like the bird that brings home meat in her beak for her young, but never tastes it herself.”

“ Those talkers foolishly think, that if they have acquired a reputation by their tongue, it is

sufficient for them ; so do not care to struggle with the laborious part, that of endeavouring to practice what they so fluently deliver.”

“ A student should begin his career by a careful finishing, and making out the parts ; as practice will give him freedom and facility of hand : a bold and unfinished manner is commonly the habit of old age.”

The following are some of his observations on drawing :

“ Take care to give your figure a sweep or sway.”

“ Outlines in waves, soft, and almost imperceptible against the back ground.”

“ Never make the contour too coarse.”

“ Avoid also those outlines and lines which are equal, which make parallels, triangles, &c.”

“ The parts that are nearest to our eye appear more enlightened, deeper shadowed, and better seen.”

“ Keep broad lights and shadows, and also principal lights and shadows.”

“ Where there is the deepest shadow it is accompanied by the brightest light.”

“ Let nothing start out, or be too strong for its place.

ON PAINTING A HEAD.

“ Let those parts which turn or retire from our eye be of broken or mixed colours, as being less distinguished and nearer the borders.”

“ Let all your shadows be of one colour; glaze them till they are so.”

“ Use red colours in the shadows of the most delicate complexions, but with discretion.”

“ Contrive to have a skreen with red or yellow colour on it, to reflect the light on the shaded part of the sitter’s face.”

“ Avoid the chalk, the brick-dust, and the charcoal, and think on a pearl and a ripe peach.”

“ Avoid long continued lines in the eyes, and too many sharp ones.”

Notwithstanding that Reynolds, in the course of a long life, had judged it prudent, for his own use and reference, to make so many memorandums of his floating ideas on the subject of his profession, yet it was impossible for any man to have thought upon the arduous labours of that profession with more modesty. Indeed, when Lord Monboddo, once discoursing with him, said, that he thought the profession of painting must require great exertion of mind and arduous study, Sir Joshua, with his accustomed modesty, answered, “ that he did not think it deserved the name of study, as it was no more than that degree of employment for the mind which fully occupies it without fatigue: and probably for this reason, was more conducive to the happiness of the individual, than the practice of any other profession.”

I think that, when Sir Joshua made this answer

he did not recollect the various knowledge and great invention which is required by those who have made the ample field of historical painting their study and pursuit. It was rather the speech of a mere portrait painter; for, at other times, I have heard him confess the great difficulty it was to him to paint history, from the want of practice in that department; which, to execute in its utmost perfection, requires more knowledge than has ever been possessed by any one man.

It was his opinion, that the population of London was no more than just sufficient to afford a reputable maintenance for eight painters only, and this number to include all the different branches of the art. What would he now say when more than eight hundred come forward and claim a maintenance, and their number is every day increasing?

I shall now resume my narrative.

In Sir Joshua's seventh discourse, delivered on the 10th December, as usual, in this year, his object was to prove the existence of a real standard of taste; this he considered as absolute as one for corporeal beauty, and as an immutable truth in itself, although, at the same time, it did not preclude the existence of certain variable and secondary truths, differing according to circumstances, in their influence as well as in their stability, and therefore particularly requiring the artist's close attention.

At the commencement of this oration, he again recommended *industry* most strenuously to the students; but with this happy distinction, that it was not “the industry of the *hands*, but of the *mind*.” He then marked the precise definition of the art itself, which, though “not a divine *gift*, so neither is it a mechanical trade;” considering its foundation as resting on solid science, but still insisting that practice, although essential to perfection, would never arrive at its aim unless directed by a judicious principle.

As great learning is not absolutely necessary for a painter, he recommended his youthful hearers not to be terrified at the want of it, but still to keep in mind that a certain degree of cultivation, such as was in their power, was nevertheless essential; and he therefore pointed out the propriety of being tolerably conversant with the poets, even in English, so as to imbibe a poetical spirit, of adopting a habit of acquiring and digesting ideas, and of obtaining some knowledge of that part of philosophy which gives an insight into human nature, as connected with the manners, characters, passions, and affections; in short that a painter “ought to know *something* concerning the mind, as well as a *great deal* concerning the body of man”—a truth which he more fully exemplified in another part of the discourse, saying, that, “in fact, as he who does not know himself, does not know others, so it may be said,

with equal truth, that he who does not know others, knows himself but very imperfectly.”

For this great end, he recommended reading as the recreation of leisure hours ; and that the student (agreeable to his own custom) should supply what partial and desultory reading cannot afford, by the conversation of learned and ingenious men, which he considered as the best of all substitutes for those who have not the means or opportunities of deep study.

Of these studies, and of this conversation, added Sir Joshua, the desire and legitimate offspring is a power of distinguishing right from wrong ; which power, when applied to works of art, he considered to be that which the world calls “ Taste.” He then proceeded to examine, whether *Taste* is so far beyond human reach as to be unattainable with care, or so very vague and capricious that no care ought to be employed about it.

To follow him through this investigation would be far beyond my proposed limits ; though it may be noticed, that he laid it down as an axiom, that although *Genius* and *Taste*, in their common acceptance, appear to be very nearly related, as “ the difference lies only in this, that genius has superadded to it a habit or power of execution : or we may say, that taste, when this power is added, changes its name and is called genius,—still is the popular opinion most absurd, that they may both claim an entire exemption from the re-

straint of rules ; that their powers are intuitive ; and that, under the name of genius great works are produced, and under the name of taste an exact judgement is given, without our knowing why, and without our being under the least obligation to reason, precept, or experience.”

After speaking of taste in general, he applied it to the art in its various particulars, observing, that it is reason and good sense which rank and estimate every art, and every part of that art, according to its importance, from the painter of animated, down to inanimate, nature ; but he protested against any man who shall prefer the inferior style, saying, that it is his taste ; for here taste has nothing, or, at least, ought to have nothing, to do with the question—“ he wants not taste, but sense and soundness of judgement.”

In avoiding one extreme of opinion, however, Sir Joshua did not commit the frequent error of adopting its opposite ; but still acknowledged that a part of taste does not absolutely belong to the external form of things, but is addressed to the mind, and actually depends on its original frame, or, as he expressed himself, “ the organization of the soul ; I mean the imagination and the passions”—but then he contended, that the principles of these are as invariable as the former, and are to be known and reasoned upon in the same manner, by an appeal to common sense deciding upon the common feelings of mankind.

In his enthusiasm for the art itself, Sir Joshua never lost sight of its highest advantages in its bearing upon the minds of mankind wherever it was cultivated ; and in this very discourse he noticed, that it has been often observed, that the good and virtuous man alone can acquire this true or just relish even of works of art ; an opinion which he considered as well founded, when we reflect that the same habit of mind which is acquired by our search after truth in the more serious duties of life, is only transferred to the pursuit of lighter amusements ; that the same disposition, the same desire to find something steady, substantial, and durable, on which the mind can lean, as it were, and rest with safety, actuate us in both cases ; and, as he adds, that the subject only is changed, but that we pursue the same method in our search after the idea of beauty and perfection in each ; “ of virtue, by looking forward beyond ourselves to society, and to the whole ; of arts, by extending our views in the same manner to all ages and all times.”

The truths with which he closed this brilliant discourse are too important to mankind in general not to be repeated here ; for Sir Joshua always had the power, as well as the desire, of rendering art useful to morals. “ The true spirit of philosophy,” said he, “ by giving knowledge, gives a manly confidence, and substitutes rational firmness in the place of vain presumption. A

man of real taste is always a man of judgment in other respects ; and those inventions which either disdain, or shrink from, reason, are generally, I fear, more like the dreams of a distempered brain, than the exalted enthusiasm of a sound and true genius. In the midst of the highest flights of fancy or imagination, reason ought to preside from first to last, though I admit her more powerful operation is upon reflection !”

1777.

ÆTAT. 53.

OF the year 1777 I have little to record concerning Sir Joshua from my own knowledge, as, at that time, I was not in London. A poetical epistle, about this period, had been printed, addressed to him, in which, whilst praising a portrait of Lord Amherst, the poet says something about the fleetness of his colours, when he good-humourly observed, in answer, that it must be acknowledged then, that he came off with flying colours.

This poem, in addition to its mixture of praise, and of a certain portion of implied censure, also offered Sir Joshua some advice, recommending to him the further painting of Burke and Garrick ; a hint which was totally unnecessary both to the wishes and the genius of the artist and the friend.

1778.

ÆTAT. 54.

In 1778 Sir Joshua published his Seven Discourses, with a Dedication to his Majesty, of which it was aptly said at the time, that it was a model to dedicators, and a hint both to writers and painters, that a portrait may be well drawn, without being varnished, and highly coloured without being daubed.

The most prominent feature in it runs thus:—
“ The regular progress of cultivated life is from necessaries to accommodations, from accommodations to ornaments.

“ By your illustrious predecessors were established Marts for Manufactures, and Colleges for Science; but for the Arts of Elegance, those Arts by which Manufactures are improved and Science refined, to found an Academy was reserved for your Majesty.

“ Had such patronage been without effect, there had been reason to believe that nature had, by some insurmountable impediment, obstructed our proficiency; but the annual exhibitions, which your Majesty has been pleased to encourage, show that only encouragement had been wanting.

“ To give advice to those who are contending for royal liberality, has been, for some years, the duty of my station in the Academy; and these

Discourses hope for your Majesty's acceptance, as well intended endeavours to excite the emulation which your notice has kindled, and to direct those studies which your bounty has rewarded.

“ *Sint Mæcenates non deerunt Marones.* ”—

I think it has already been observed, that at all the times when Sir Joshua delivered his discourses to the Royal Academy, the audience was very numerous, being composed of the learned and the great, as well as those engaged in the study of the arts.

A gold medal was presented once in every two years by the Royal Academy, as a prize for the best historical picture, to be painted by a student of the Academy.

A young painter who had made several different designs for the composition of the story he was about to execute in order to his becoming a candidate, brought his sketches to Sir Joshua, to consult with him and have his opinion as to which was the best in point of sentiment, or most clear in explaining the history.

Sir Joshua's answer was to this effect: “ You may choose whichever you please; it will turn out precisely the same; you are to recollect that your picture is to be judged of by painters only. It will be the manual execution of the work, and that alone which will engross the atten-

tion of Artists, and the degree of merit displayed in that part of the art is what will determine them in their election of the candidate for the prize.

“ It is no matter how long or how short the time may have been in which you have done the work ; or with how much difficulty, or with how much ease you have accomplished it. The result alone is to be considered.”

This is quite consistent with some observations in the fragments preserved by Mr. Malone, where he says, “ My principal labour was employed on the whole together ; and I was never weary of changing, and trying different modes and different effects. I had always some scheme in my mind, and a perpetual desire to advance. By constantly endeavouring to do my best, I acquired a power of doing that with spontaneous facility, which at first was the effort of my whole mind ; and my reward was threefold ; the satisfaction resulting from acting on this first principle, improvement in my art, and the pleasure derived from a constant pursuit after excellence.”

In this year he painted one of his best portraits of Dr. Johnson, who observes of it in a letter to Mrs. Thrale, “ I have twice sat to Sir Joshua, and he seems to like his own performance. He has projected another in which I am to be busy ; but we can think of it at leisure”—and in a subsequent epistle, he adds, “ Sir Joshua has finished my picture, and it seems to please every body, but I shall wait till I see how it pleases you.”

In this strict intimacy so long kept up with Dr. Johnson, Sir Joshua seems to have considered himself as enjoying both pleasure and advantage; and upon one occasion, whilst conversing with a friend upon the strictness with which Johnson inculcated to all his acquaintance the importance of perpetual vigilance against the slightest degree of falsehood, he observed that the effect had been, that all who were of his *school* were distinguished for a love of truth and accuracy, which they might not have possessed in the same degree, if they had not been acquainted with Johnson.

Sir Joshua's regard for the memory of his departed friend Goldsmith is properly recorded by Boswell in a conversation which took place at this period, at a dinner party at his house. When talking of the "Traveller" he said, "I was glad to hear Charles Fox say, it was one of the finest poems in the English language." Mr. Langton then asked, "Why were you glad? you surely had no doubt of this before?" to which Johnson added, "No; the merit of the *Traveller* is so well established, that Mr. Fox's praise cannot augment it, nor his censure diminish it;" when, with great modesty, Sir Joshua replied, "But his friends may suspect they had too great a partiality for him."

Speaking of this conversation afterwards, Johnson seemed to display some little jealousy at Sir Joshua's friendship with the heads of a party to which his own politics were inimical, for he said,

“ Yes, Sir, I knocked Fox on the head, without ceremony. Reynolds is too much under Fox and Burke at present. He is under the *Fox Star* and the *Irish Constellation*. He is always under some planet ;” —but the truth is, that Sir Joshua never attempted to borrow light from any political or scientific luminary, however brilliant ; for, to carry on the metaphor, ’twas his own powerful attraction that brought him into the same sphere with such illustrious persons.

Soon after Mr. Boswell, talking of a phrase of Garrick’s, who called Lord Camden a “ little lawyer,” at the time he was boasting of his acquaintance, Johnson said, “ Well, Sir, Garrick talked very properly. Lord Camden was a *little lawyer* to be associating so familiarly with a player ;” on which, Sir Joshua observed, and with great truth, “ that Johnson considered Garrick to be, as it were, his *property*, and that he would allow no man either to blame or to praise Garrick in his presence, without contradicting him.”

Another conversation about this time, recorded by Mr. Boswell, is so descriptive of Sir Joshua’s mild, yet persevering manner, in argumentative, yet friendly discourse, that I should not feel myself at liberty to omit it.

Whilst dining at General Paoli’s, the subject of wine drinking was introduced, which Sir Joshua defended, and Boswell at that time drinking water in imitation of Johnson, the latter exclaimed,

“ Boswell is a bolder combatant than Sir Joshua : he argues for wine without the help of wine ; but Sir Joshua with it.” Sir Joshua replied, “ But to please one’s company is a strong motive ;” when Johnson, then supposing the whole company to be a little elevated, exclaimed, “ I won’t argue any more with you, Sir : you are too far gone ;” to which he mildly answered, “ I should have thought so indeed, Sir, had I made such a speech as you have now.” On this Johnson drew himself up, blushing, as Boswell describes it, and said, “ Nay, don’t be angry, I did not mean to offend you.”

Sir Joshua then observed, “ At first the taste of wine was disagreeable to me ; but I brought myself to drink it, *that I might be like other people*. The pleasure of drinking wine is so connected with pleasing your company, that altogether there is something of social goodness in it.” As this touched upon Johnson’s own peculiarity he felt it, and, though inaccurately, complained that it was only saying the same thing over again.

On another occasion Sir Joshua shewed his habit and facility of judging of character, for whilst conversing about Johnson in his absence, Boswell said, that his power of reasoning was very strong, and that he had a peculiar art of drawing characters, which was as rare as good portrait painting. “ Yes, replied Sir Joshua, he is undoubtedly admirable in this ; but in order to mark the charac-

ters which he draws, he overcharges them, and gives people more than they really have, whether of good or bad.”

Another proof of Sir Joshua's nice discrimination of character is seen in the distinction he makes between true politeness and the affectation of it, and clearly given by him in the instance of two noblemen, to whom he paid a morning visit on a Sunday. The first that he paid his respects to received him with extraordinary affected condescension, and seemed very desirous to please, talked to him the whole time on nothing but his art, in order to give him a fair opportunity of appearing to the most advantage, and observed to him, that he had requested the pleasure of this visit on a Sunday that he might not occasion his losing that time which, on other days, could be so much better employed.

After quitting this nobleman, he paid his next visit to another, (I think it was Lord Chesterfield,) who unlike the first, received him with the same freedom as if he had been his equal, never once spoke upon the subject of art, nor observed that Sunday was the day of rest for the laborious; but discoursed on the news and the occurrences of the day, and on such other topics as a gentleman of education is supposed to be acquainted with, and no word escaped him that denoted his recollection of any difference in their stations.

This anecdote was related to me by Sir Joshua

himself many years after the occurrence, as an instance that had struck him very forcibly as a fine contrast.

The perspicuity and clearness of Sir Joshua's judgement were evident in all his conversation, and another little instance is thus given in his own words from a fragment written in his own hand.

“ Josiah Tucker, Dean of Gloucester, at a meeting of the Society for the Encouragement of Arts, Manufactures, and Commerce, said, that he thought a pin-maker was a more useful and valuable member of society than Raffaelle.

“ This is an observation of a very narrow mind; a mind that is confined to the mere object of commerce, that sees with a microscopic eye but a part of the great machine of the economy of life, and thinks that small part which he sees to be the whole. Commerce is the means, not the end, of happiness or pleasure: the end is a rational enjoyment of life, by means of arts and sciences; it is, therefore, the highest degree of folly to set the means in a higher rank of esteem than the accomplished end. It is as much as to say that the brick-maker is a more useful member of society than the architect who employs him. The usefulness of the brick-maker is acknowledged, but the rank of him and the architect are very different. No man deserves better of mankind than he who has the art of opening sources of intellectual pleasure and instruction by means of the senses.”

It is not to be understood from this anecdote that Sir Joshua was apt to over-rate the degree of his profession in respect to its rank in society. The following circumstance will show how just a view he had of its comparative importance.

Sir Joshua Reynolds had as great a portion of enthusiasm for his art, as any man can have for the study which he may have adopted; and, indeed, without this stimulus nothing great or difficult can be accomplished: yet he was totally free from that weakness so commonly found among professional men, of over-rating either the rank, value, or importance of his profession. He felt it as a duty to excel in the department which he had undertaken: he relied upon it entirely, as his great source of support and honour, his bulwark and preserver; but he did not expect or require, as a thing of course, that others should see it in the same view: it was of high consequence to him; but not equally so to *them*. The plank that saves a man from drowning becomes to him of more value than a first-rate man of war, yet he does not expect that others should look on it as of the same degree of importance. Hence Sir Joshua always considered this professional kind of mania as a species of pedantry, and thought a certain eminent professor of the science of music very absurd who, when he related a circumstance of three great musicians having been introduced at the court of a prince, said “these three great *personages* were

presented," a term only applicable to persons of high rank in society.

It has often been remarked that the king never commissioned Sir Joshua for a single picture; indeed he never sat to him but once, when his portrait was painted by him for the Royal Academy.

Soon after that picture was finished, Sir Joshua went down on a visit to Dr. Warton at Winchester College, where he was particularly noticed by their Majesties, who were then making a tour through the summer encampments, having taken Winchester in their route.

In Dr. Warton's biography, some of the particulars of this visit are entered into; his house being stated at that period to have been filled with men, some of whom were of high and acknowledged talents; amongst others, in addition to Sir Joshua, were the late Lord Palmerston, Messrs. Stanley and Warton, and Mr. Garrick; a whimsical accident is stated to have occurred to the latter at one of the reviews, and which Sir Joshua afterwards recounted with great humour.

At one of those field-days in the vicinity, Garrick found it necessary to dismount, when his horse escaped from his hold and ran off; throwing himself immediately into his professional attitude he cried out, as if on Bosworth field. "A horse! a horse! my kingdom for a horse!"

This exclamation, and the accompanying attitude, excited great amazement amongst the sur-

rounding spectators, who knew him not ; but it could not escape his Majesty's quick apprehension, for it being within his hearing, he immediately said, " Those must be the tones of Garrick ! see if he is not on the ground." The theatrical and dismounted monarch was immediately brought to his Majesty, who not only condoled with him most good humouredly on his misfortune, but flatteringly added, " that his delivery of Shakspeare could never pass undiscovered."

Of further incidents relative to art, connected with the biography of Sir Joshua during this year, I have to mention, that Mr. Score, a native of Devonshire, was his pupil about this time, and that on the 10th of December, as usual, the President delivered his eighth discourse.

In this he laid it down as a truth, that all the principles both of painting and poetry have their foundation in the human mind ; that novelty and contrast, however necessary, must still become defects, if carried to excess ; and that even simplicity itself might be overstrained.

These points he generally illustrated, as emanating from the mind itself, by stating, that as variety reanimates the attention, which is apt to languish under a continual sameness, so novelty makes a more forcible impression on the mind, than can be produced by the representation of what we have often seen before, whilst contrast stimulates the power of comparison by opposition.

All this he considered so obvious as not to require proof; but at the same time he very judiciously added, that the mind, though an active principle, has likewise a disposition to indolence; and though it loves exercise, loves it only to a certain degree, beyond which it is very unwilling to be led, or driven. From this, then, he inferred, that the pursuit of novelty and variety may be carried to excess; for whenever variety entirely destroys the pleasure arising from uniformity and repetition, and whenever novelty counteracts and shuts out the pleasure arising from old habits and customs, they must then oppose, in too great a degree, the indolence of our disposition, so that the mind can only bear, with pleasure, a small portion of novelty at a time.

This position he exemplified further, by observing, that when the objects are scattered and divided into many equal parts in any composition, the eye is thereby perplexed and fatigued, from not knowing where to rest, where to find the principal action, or where is the principal figure; for when all are making equal pretensions to notice, all are in equal danger of neglect. “The expression which is used very often on these occasions is, *the piece wants repose*; a word which perfectly expresses a relief of the mind from that state of hurry and anxiety which it suffers, when looking at a work of this character.”

Sir Joshua then proceeded to illustrate his sub-

ject by a critical review of both painters and poets, and took occasion, before closing, to introduce that excellent note on Macbeth, already noticed.

I recollect a circumstance about this time, which shews his openness to conviction, and his readiness to correct whatever he found amiss in his own works. A young artist of the name of Powell, who was much employed in copying Sir Joshua's pictures in a small size, in oil colours, and which he executed with much accuracy and taste, amongst others, copied the great picture of the Marlborough family now at Blenheim castle, which Sir Joshua had just finished; and when Powell produced the copy for his inspection, he surprized him by finding much fault with the effect of the back ground, although it was an exact imitation of the original picture. Powell fatigued by the labour he had already bestowed, protested he could make it no better, but Sir Joshua quieted his alarm, by assuring him it was with his own original that he was offended, not with the copy: and accordingly altered it afterwards upon mature reflection.

This Mr. Powell had borrowed a beautiful picture by Sir Joshua of a child, the face in shadow, to make a copy from it. When he had finished his copy and was taking the picture home, a young gentleman in the street, in flourishing about the stick which he carried in his hand, by accident struck the picture, when a large part of the face and hand of the painting dropped from the

canvass, to the utter astonishment and dismay of poor Powell, who was totally unable to repair the damage.

1779.

ÆTAT. 55.

IN the year 1779 Sir Joshua devoted his abilities to partly ornamenting of the new apartments in Somerset-house, by executing a picture for the handsome ceiling of the library. In the centre is *Theory* sitting on a cloud. In her hand she holds a scroll with an inscription, "Theory is the knowledge of what is truly nature," a definition quite in unison with the general principle so ably maintained by the painter throughout his discourses.

It is an obvious remark, that the point of view in which paintings on ceilings can be seen, is by no means favourable to the general effect; this difficulty has, however, been surmounted, in some degree, by the discriminating skill of Sir Joshua, and his judicious choice of his subject, to which he has imparted the most graceful lightness, representing her rather as hovering over the head of the spectator, than as fixed on any permanent seat.

In addition to this elegant specimen of his art, are the two royal portraits, in the council-room, of their present Majesties; the King being represented on his coronation chair, as at the performance of that ceremony, and his consort also,

adorned with all the paraphernalia of regal costume and state.

This year terminated the mortal career of Garrick, whose fame will, however, last long. He had continued to act on the stage until a late period of his life; and it being remarked to Sir Joshua as rather extraordinary, that this Roscius of the British drama should still undergo so much fatigue after his fortune was made, and his fame established, he observed, with great knowledge of human nature, "That it was necessary for Garrick to do so, in order to preserve his popularity, and to keep up his importance with the great, who soon neglect and forget those who cease to be the town talk, however eminent they may have been," so much does fashion govern the world.

On Mr. Garrick's demise, a monody was written by Mr. Sheridan* to his memory; in which he very

* Since the publication of the first edition, we have also witnessed a monody on the admired orator himself; of whom I recollect that immediately after his marriage with Miss Linley, Sir Joshua invited them to dinner, together with a large company, with a full hope that he should gratify his guests with a song from so famous a performer, and accordingly had procured a fine toned piano-forte in perfect order for the purpose: when lo! to his great mortification, on hints being given that a song from her would be received as a great gratification and favour, Mr. Sheridan answered that Mrs. Sheridan, *with his assent*, had come to a resolution never again to sing in public company—Sir Joshua repeated this next day in my hearing with some degree of anger, saying "what reason could they think I had to invite them to dinner, unless it was to hear her sing, for she cannot talk?"

elegantly shews, that the fame of the orator and the actor must be nearly as evanescent as those exertions on which it was founded, if not aided by the poet or the painter, whose works also have a better chance of immortality. In this production he paid Sir Joshua the compliment of placing his efforts in apposition with those of Raffaele himself.

“ Whate’er of wonder Reynolds now may raise,
 Raffaele still boasts contemporary praise ;
 Each dazzling light, and gaudier bloom subdu’d,
 With undiminished awe his works are view’d :
 E’en Beauty’s portrait wears a softer prime,
 Touch’d by the tender hand of mellowing time.”

In this year Sir Joshua raised his price to fifty guineas for a head size, which he continued during the remainder of his life : his rapidly accumulating fortune was not, however, for his own sole enjoyment ; he still felt the luxury of doing good, and had many objects of bounty pointed out to him by his friend Johnson, who, in one of his letters in this year to Mrs. Thrale, inquires, “ Will master give me any thing for my poor neighbours ? I have had from *Sir Joshua* and Mr. Strahan.”

1780.

ÆTAT. 56.

THE year 1780 is particularly noticeable, as that in which the Academy first began to exhibit

at Somerset-house ; their apartments in that building having recently been finished for their reception.

On this occasion the critics of the day seemed to consider themselves as arrived at a new era in the arts, or, at least, in the annals of the Academy itself, thus by the Sovereign's munificence established in a superb edifice, supposed to be well calculated for all the purposes of the Society : and I find the two following criticisms which were written upon that occasion.

One of them is in an address to his Majesty, prefixed to a "Candid Review of the Exhibition," where it is said, that "The excellence to which the arts have arisen calls particularly on the attention of the world. The progress of the Academy has been so rapid, that, though this is only the 12th year of its existence, it has already made Britain the seat of Arts, and in painting, sculpture, and engraving, it rivals, if it does not excel, all the other schools in Europe. In all ages the progress of the arts to excellence has been slow and gradual ; but it is the singular merit of the Royal Academy of Britain, that it has broke through the fetters with which similar institutions have heretofore been confined, and by one rapid stride has attained the pre-eminence of all competitors."

In opposition to this, a writer in the London Courant observes, that "an establishment bearing the sanction of royal patronage, and committed to

the direction of a genius like that of Sir Joshua Reynolds, whose works, the acknowledged patterns of grace and expression, conduce not more to excite emulation, than his lectures serve to instruct the students in the solid principles of design and composition, might have been presumed to have exerted such effects of British genius in the sublimer branches of the arts, as might almost have rivalled the exquisite sculpture of Ancient Greece and Rome, or the finished paintings of the Roman, Florentine, and Flemish schools; but in Sculpture, as well as in History, Painting, and Landscape, we cannot but perceive a mortifying disparity in the best of these pieces, in the late exhibition, when placed in competition with the works before mentioned."

This wise critic, it seems, expected that painters would start up as mushrooms do, and thrive under as small a portion of attention, but he ought to have known that the Arts are not to be raised by the numbers, however great, who only gaze on them, and do no more.^f

Sir Joshua's offerings to the Exhibition this year consisted of his historical portrait of Miss Beauclerc in the character of Spencer's Una, and of his emblematical figure of Justice, then drawn as a model for the window which Mr. Jarvis was painting at Oxford; to these were subjoined his portraits of the historian Gibbon, of Lady Beaumont, of Lord Cholmondeley, and of the present

Duke of Gloucester. The receipts of this year's exhibition exceeded the sum of 3000*l*.

Sir Joshua in addition to these pictures thus exhibited, also painted for the Royal Academy that portrait of Sir William Chambers which they now possess.

It was in this year also that he painted that portrait of himself, a half length, now in the Royal Academy, and which has a cap, and the gown of his honorary degree at Oxford. In this picture is introduced the bust of Michael Angelo, whose works he always contemplated, and spoke of, with enthusiasm : this is nearly the same dress in which he has represented himself in several others, one of them sent to Florence, and another, a three-quarter, in the possession of the Duke of Rutland.

That Reynolds was as willing to give advice to others, as to profit from the humblest hints, is evident from his conduct towards Mr. Pocock, the present eminent marine painter, who, in 1780, sent his first attempt in oil colours, to him, at the same time desiring to have his candid opinion upon the picture, and, if he thought proper, that it might be exhibited at the Royal Academy exhibition. To this he received the following answer.

To N. Pocock, Esq.

Leicester Fields, May 4th, 1780.

“ DEAR SIR,

“ Your picture came too late for the exhibition. It is much beyond what I expected from a first

essay in oil colours: all the parts separately are extremely well painted; but there wants a harmony in the whole together; there is no union between the clouds, the sea, and the sails. Though the sea appears sometimes as green as you have painted it, yet it is a choice very unfavourable to the art; it seems to me absolutely necessary in order to produce harmony, and that the picture should appear to be painted, as the phrase is, from one palette, that those three great objects of ship-painting should be very much of the same colour as was the practice of Vandevelde, and he seems to be driven to this conduct by necessity. Whatever colour predominates in a picture, that colour must be introduced in other parts; but no green colour, such as you have given to the sea, can make a part of a sky. I believe the truth is, that, however the sea may appear green, when you are looking down on it, and it is very near—at such a distance as your ships are supposed to be, it assumes the colour of the sky.

“ I would recommend to you, above all things, to paint from nature instead of drawing; to carry your palette and pencils to the water side. This was the practice of Vernet, whom I knew at Rome; he then shewed me his studies in colours, which struck me very much, for that truth which those works only have which are produced while the impression is warm from nature: at that time he was a perfect master of the character of water,

if I may use the expression, he is now reduced to a mere mannerist, and no longer to be recommended for imitation, except you would imitate him by uniting landscape to ship-painting, which certainly makes a more pleasing composition than either alone.

“ I am, with great respect,

“ Your most humble and obedient servant,

“ JOSHUA REYNOLDS.”

This letter contains much excellent advice as well as observation; but why Sir Joshua should say of the harmony of Vandewelde, that he seems to be driven to this conduct from necessity in any instance, is to me inexplicable; or, as if there could be any other reason than that of a nice observation of nature. Vandewelde was an exquisite imitator of nature, and therefore his pictures have harmony. To say that nature is out of harmony, is a contradiction in terms, and of course nonsense. If at any time we imagine that we see nature out of harmony, we may rest assured that the defect is in ourselves, and not in nature; and in respect to Vandewelde, it is my opinion, that, as a colourist, for his truth to nature, and harmony of effect, he has never been surpassed by the professors of any department in art.

In this year, too, he delivered two discourses, the first of which took place on the 16th of October, on the opening of the Academy at their present apartments.

His object in this oration was a general one, to impress upon the minds of his audience, a full conviction of the advantages resulting to society from the cultivation of intellectual pleasures ; and here he most forcibly inculcated that “ the estimation in which we stand with respect to our neighbours, will be in proportion to the degree in which we excel or are inferior to them in the acquisition of intellectual excellence, of which trade, and its consequential riches, must be acknowledged to give the means ; but a people whose whole attention is absorbed in those pursuits, and who forget the end, can aspire but little above the rank of a barbarous nation. Every establishment that tends to the cultivation of the pleasures of the mind, as distinct from those of sense, may be considered as an inferior school of morality, where the mind is polished and prepared for higher attainments.” He concluded with an elegant eulogium on *Refinement of Taste*, most truly saying, that if it does not lead directly to purity of manners, it obviates at least their greatest depravation, by disentangling the mind from appetite, “ and conducting the thoughts through successive stages of excellence, till that contemplation of universal rectitude and harmony which began by Taste, may, as it is exalted and refined, conclude in Virtue !”

Though the hospitable urbanity of Sir Joshua Reynolds was always directed to the promotion of social and friendly intercourse among his inti-

mates, yet it sometimes happened, as in all mixed societies, that altercations would arise. One incident, which took place at his house in this year, deserves notice, as it also relates to two men of great importance in the literary world.

All the friends both of Johnson and Warton lamented the unhappy disagreement between them, which almost at once put a period to a warm and long continued friendship of many years. The whole particulars were only known to the parties themselves; but one of the company who overheard part of the wordy conflict, begins his account by stating Johnson as saying, "Sir, I am not used to be contradicted;" to which Dr. Warton replied, "Sir, if you were, our admiration could not be increased, but our love might." On the interference of the gentleman who overheard this, the dispute ceased, but a coolness always existed afterwards, which, I find stated, was increased by many trifling circumstances that, without the intervention of this contest, might have passed unnoticed by either party.

The very various classes of different companies that were to be met with at Sir Joshua's table has not been improperly remarked by Mr. John Courteney, in a biographical sketch of his own life, although the volume contains but little else that is extraordinary or amusing: in page 77 he observes, that "Mr. Boswell was a favourite of Sir Joshua Reynolds. His table was frequented

by men of the first talents, who met with mutual complacence and good-humour. Politics and party were never introduced. Literary subjects were discussed with good sense, taste, and fancy, without pedantic, tiresome dissertations. Wit and humour occasionally enlivened the festive board; but story-telling, premeditated *bon-mots*, and studied witticisms, were not tolerated for a moment. Sir Joshua was excellently calculated for promoting lively rational conversation. His mind was active, perpetually at work. He aimed at originality, and threw out observations and sentiments as new, which had been often discussed by various authors; for his knowledge was principally acquired by conversation, and therefore superficial. However, he was a most pleasing, amiable companion; his manners easy, conciliating, and unaffected. He had great good sense, and an exquisite correct taste; and if his ideas were not always new, they were often set off by liveliness of imagination; and his conversation abounded in pleasing and interesting anecdotes.

“ There was something singular in the style and œconomy of his table, that contributed to pleasantry and good-humour; a coarse inelegant plenty, without any regard to order and arrangement. A table, prepared for seven or eight, was often compelled to contain fifteen or sixteen. When this pressing difficulty was got over, a deficiency of knives and forks, plates, and glasses

succeeded. The attendance was in the same style ; and it was absolutely necessary to call instantly for beer, bread, or wine, that you might be supplied before the first course was over. He was once prevailed on to furnish the table with decanters and glasses at dinner, to save time, and prevent the tardy manœuvres of two or three occasional undisciplined domestics. As these accelerating utensils were demolished in the course of service, Sir Joshua could never be persuaded to replace them. But these trifling embarrassments only served to enhance the hilarity and singular pleasure of the entertainment.

“ The wine, cookery, and dishes were but little attended to ; nor was the fish or venison ever talked of, or recommended. Amidst this convivial, animated bustle amongst his guests, our host sat perfectly composed, always attentive to what was said, never minding what was eat or drank, but left every one at perfect liberty to scramble for himself. Temporal and spiritual peers, physicians, lawyers, actors, and musicians, composed the motley groupe, and played their parts without dissonance or discord.

“ At five o'clock precisely dinner was served, whether all the invited guests were arrived or not. Sir Joshua was never so fashionably ill-bred as to wait an hour, perhaps, for two or three persons of rank or title, and put the rest of the company out of humour by this invidious distinction.”

What occasioned the inconveniences, as remarked by Mr. Courteney, was his frequently inviting many of those who happened to call on him at the moment, and of which the servants had no previous intimation, as no card of invitation had been sent to them. Another cause of this irregularity, was, that having no competent house-keeper, the management was left almost wholly to the servants, as he was too much occupied in his profession to lend it a thought himself after he had given a general order for a dinner party ; however, it may be remarked, that notwithstanding those inconveniences, none ever refused to partake of them or appeared not to esteem it both an honour and pleasure to be at his table, from the highest to the lowest.

This mixture of company calls to my remembrance a remark of a well-known character upon that subject.

A large company being invited to dine at Sir Joshua's, Mr. Dunning, afterwards Lord Ashburton, was one, and chanced to be the first person of the company who came. On entering the room, he said, " Well, Sir Joshua, and who have you got to dine with you to-day ? for the last time I dined with you in your house, the assembly was of such a sort, that by G—— I believe all the rest of the world were at peace, for that afternoon at least."

This observation was by no means ill applied ; for as Sir Joshua's companions were chiefly com-

posed of men of genius, they were often disputatious, and apt to be vehement in argument.

I have mentioned an anecdote of the late Lord Ashburton, to which I may add, that * at another

* As the Literary Club has been often noticed in the Memoirs, I shall give extracts from two letters, written in this year, as they convey a clear idea of the peculiar splendour of the Society at that period.

“ Mr. Jones (afterwards Sir William) to the Bishop of St. Asaph.

MY LORD,

November 23, 1780.

“ Had I not been prevented, by particular business, from writing to your lordship on Tuesday evening and yesterday, I would have informed you before, that we had done ourselves the honour (and a very great one we shall ever esteem it) of electing your lordship a member of our Club. The election was, of course, unanimous, and it was carried with the sincere approbation and eagerness of all present. I am sorry to add, that Lord Camden and the Bishop of Chester † were rejected. When bishops and chancellors honour us with offering to dine with us at a tavern, it seems very extraordinary, that we should ever reject such an offer: but there is no reasoning on the caprice of men. Of our Club, I will only say, that there is no branch of human knowledge, on which some of our members are not capable of giving information, and, I trust, that, as the honour will be our's, so your lordship will receive some pleasure from the company, once a fortnight, of some of our first writers and critics, as well as our most virtuous senators and accomplished men. I think myself highly honoured in having been a member of this society near ten years, and chiefly, in having contributed to add such names to the number of our friends, as those of your Lordship and Lord Althorpe.

“ The Bishop of St. Asaph to Mr. (afterwards Sir William) Jones.

“ DEAR SIR,

November 27th.

“ You was prevented by Sir Joshua Reynolds in your kind intentions of giving me the earliest notice of the honour you have done me. I believe Mr. Fox will allow me to say, that the ho-

† Dr. Beilby Porteus.

time Dunning, in conversation with Sir Joshua, mentioned to him, on seeing Lord Mansfield's portrait in the gallery, the high estimation in which he held that nobleman's great abilities; saying that, during all the early part of his own studies, he made it a matter of the first consequence always to attend at the courts of law, where Lord Mansfield was to speak, and with the same eagerness, he added, "as you, Sir Joshua, would desire and delight to see the finest picture by Titian or by Raffaele."

Lord Mansfield sat to Sir Joshua for that excellent portrait which has since been engraved by Bartolozzi. In the progress of painting this picture, Sir Joshua one day asked him his opinion of it, and if he thought it was a likeness. When his lordship replied, that it was totally out of his power to judge of its degree of resemblance, as he had not seen his own face in any looking-glass, during the last thirty years of his life; for his servant always dressed him and put on his wig which therefore rendered it quite unnecessary for him to look at himself in a mirror.

nour of being elected into the Turk's Head Club is not inferior to that of being the representative of Westminster or Surrey. The electors are certainly more disinterested, and I should say they are much better judges of merit, if they had not rejected Lord Camden and chosen me.

"I flatter myself with the hopes of great pleasure and improvement in such society as you describe, which is the only club of which I ever wished myself a member."

Count D'Adhemar, some time ambassador from the former court of France, when in England, had two portraits at his house in London—one of the late unfortunate Queen of France, and the other of her favorite lady, Madame de Polignac ; these were by the hand of Madame Le Brun, the most esteemed artist of France for portraits.

When D'Adhemar left England, his house was publicly shewn at the sale of his furniture: the nobility flocked to see those two portraits ; and it became the fashion to admire them, and to speak of them with the utmost extravagance of praise. But an eminent English painter of the time, who did not coincide with the popular opinion, has thus ludicrously described the excellencies of Madame Le Brun's merits :—

“ Where burnish'd beads, silk, satin, laces, vie,
In leaden lustre with the gooseberry eye ;
Where broad cloth breathes, to talk where cushions strive,
And all, but Sir, or Madam, looks alive !”

These portraits Sir Joshua also went to see, and soon after, when I paid him a visit, I found him with Mr. Merry, the poet, discoursing on the merits of these very pictures. As I had not conceived that it was worth any painter's trouble to go to see them, I had not gone ; but was glad when I found that he had seen them, that I might have the opinion of so great a judge.

I said "Pray what do you think of them Sir Joshua?"

"That they are very fine," he answered.

"How fine?" I said.

"As fine as those of any painter," was his answer.

"As fine as those of any painter, do you say? do you mean living or dead?"—

When he answered me rather briskly, "Either living or dead."

I then, in great surprize, exclaimed, "Good G — ! what, as fine as Vandyke?"

He answered tartly, "Yes, and finer."

I said no more, perceiving he was displeas'd at my questioning him.

I mention the above circumstance to shew his disinclination to oppose the popular opinion, or to say any thing against the interest of a cotemporary artist: as it was not his intention to mislead me, but only to put a stop to my enquiries.

There are, in succession, meteors of fashion which we see suddenly rise and as suddenly fall; with respect to these, it is but policy that established professors should be silent, or, if oblig'd to speak, that what they say should be only an echo of the public voice. To stem the torrent of applause is impossible—to give even a candid opinion would be to incur the charge of envy, and therefore it would not be received as truth. The world must be left to find out its own errors; and

when this happens, which always soon follows extravagant and improper praise, the object of former public admiration is frequently not only denied even its just claims, but cruelly attacked with all the rage of disappointment, and condemned never to raise its head again.

Much, however, of what an artist says, on such a subject, might perhaps better be distinguished by the manner than by the matter. It cannot be supposed, that a liberal mind would be the pander to ignorance or prejudice. The wise then will understand; and fools cannot be led further astray.

On subjects where Sir Joshua was not afraid of being misunderstood, his manner was always to speak his sentiments plainly; and I recollect that, soon after my return from Italy, I described to Sir Joshua one of the pictures by Raffaele, in the Vatican, which, in respect to its bold and accomplished expression, appeared to me to be the finest I had ever seen. It is that of the miracle of Bolzena, in which we find pure nature, unparalleled simplicity, and decided expression. The subject represents a miracle, said to have happened either at Orvieto or Bolzena to a priest who, being incredulous of the doctrine of transubstantiation, saw the Host miraculously dissolved into blood, before his eyes, as he celebrated mass.

In the countenance of the priest, Raffaele has placed the whole power of his art, and his whole dependance for the explanation of the subject: as

this sceptic seems not to have moved or altered his position on the sight of the miracle, but remains just in the same state as he would have done if nothing extraordinary had happened; and this appears the most natural manner for him to act in, as the best means to conceal, from the surrounding spectators, the heinousness of his former infidelity, which had occasioned this miracle to bring him to a sense of his wickedness: an inferior artist would undoubtedly have thrown him into some violent and obvious action of astonishment, that the vulgar would have understood and admired; but Raffaelle has depended solely on the character and expression in the face.—The priest is still on his knees, with the napkin, which contained the sacred Host, in his hand; when, unfolding it, he discovers the wafer dissolved into a cross of blood. This figure, although young and handsome in person, yet, in point of character, has the countenance of a bad man, or a scoundrel, and his face, red with shame and confusion, clearly shews the fright and inward conviction so strange and awful an appearance had occasioned in his mind.

When I had finished describing this picture to Sir Joshua, and expressed the delight it gave me, I was surprised to hear him say, that it was only my own imagination that had made it out so distinctly; as it could not possibly be expressed so evidently as I had conceived it to be.

There are several prints of the picture although very indifferent ones; however, by referring to

them, it may still be seen whether I have been just in my description of it or not.

Sir Joshua's backwardness, at yielding faith to any flight of enthusiasm on the subject of this picture, ought not to be considered as arising from an unwillingness to do critical justice to the merits of Raffaele, but from a kind of caprice at the moment: neither could he always preserve his own works from the attacks of caprice, envy, or ignorance.

In this year, and for several successive ones, Sir Joshua was busily employed on his designs for the celebrated painted window, in New College Chapel at Oxford, consisting of seven compartments in the lower range, each twelve feet high and three wide, and containing the allegorical figures of the four cardinal, and three christian virtues; viz. Temperance, Fortitude, Justice, Prudence, Faith, Hope, and Charity. In all of these, the figures are accompanied by their several attributes; and they are all single, except the centre one, where Charity is represented by a groupe, which, as described by a critic, deserves especial notice for the expression of the various persons introduced, whilst the "fondling of the infant, the importunity of the boy, and the placid affection of the girl, together with the divided attention of the mother, are all distinguishably and judiciously marked with a knowledge of character for which the great artist who gave this design is so justly celebrated."

Above this, on a grand scale of ten feet by eighteen, is the *Nativity*, a composition including thirteen figures, and in this, it has been well observed, that Sir Joshua has great advantages over Corregio, who, in his famous *Notte*, introduces no light in the painting but that which proceeds from the infant Saviour. The idea is not the invention even of Corregio, but certainly grand, and has been most judiciously *adopted*, for a transparency, by Sir Joshua, who cannot be said to have *copied* it, as his execution, both in *manner* and *circumstance*, gives it the effect of novelty; and, from the transparent medium on which it was ultimately to be seen, it would be light actually proceeding through that part from whence the fancy of the painter supposes it to emanate. Sir Joshua's design of this picture has more resemblance to a *Nativity* by Hannibal Carrache than to the *Notte* of Corregio.

This latter design was sold to the late Duke of Rutland for 1200 guineas,* those of the Cardinal Virtues are now in the possession of the Marchioness of Thomond.

The final execution, of copying this picture on the window, was entrusted to Mr. Jervis, whose portrait, as well as that of Sir Joshua himself, is introduced in the larger compartment; they are represented as shepherds.

* This picture for which it is said the duke had been offered £10,000., was burnt at the fire at Belvoir Castle, Oct., 1816, with many others painted by Sir Joshua.

Mr. Jervis originally practised in Dublin, as a painter on glass; but his friends pointing out to him the superior advantages which might arise from a residence in London, he proceeded to that capital, and was employed both by Sir Joshua and Mr. West in the transmission of their works from canvass to be preserved on glass, at Oxford, Windsor, and Greenwich.

With respect to the grand work, which is noticed with great and due praise both by Dr. Warton and Mr. Thomas Warton, I may also be permitted to add some of Sir Joshua's own observations, as contained in a letter preserved by Mr. Malone in his work.

It seems that it had been at first intended to distribute the various figures in different parts of the chapel; but this Sir Joshua very judiciously opposed, and prevailed on the parties concerned to have the west window prepared for the reception of the whole by an alteration of the stone work. In a letter, written about two years previous to this, he had observed, "Supposing this scheme to take place, my idea is to paint, in the great space in the centre, Christ in the Manger, on the principle that Corregio has done it, in the famous picture called *thé Notte*; making all the light proceed from Christ. These tricks of the art, as they may be called, seem to be more properly adapted to glass-painting than any other kind. This middle space will be filled with the

Virgin, Christ, Joseph, and angels; the two smaller spaces on each side I shall fill with the shepherds coming to worship; and the seven divisions below with the figures of Faith, Hope, Charity, and the Four Cardinal Virtues; which will make a proper rustic base, or *foundation* for the support of the Christian Religion. Upon the whole, it appears to me, that chance has presented to us materials so well adapted to our purpose, that if we had the whole window of our own invention and contrivance, we should not probably have succeeded better.’

The execution of this window, soon after, drew forth the following address, which is too poetic to be passed over :

“ Ah! stay thy treach’rous hand, forbear to trace
 Those faultless forms of elegance and grace!
 Ah! cease to spread thy bright transparent mass
 With Titian’s pencil, o’er the speaking glass!
 Nor steal, by strokes of art, with truth combin’d,
 The fond illusions of my wayward mind!
 For long enamour’d of a barb’rous age,
 A faithless truant to the classic page,
 Long have I lov’d to catch the simple chime
 Of minstrel harps, and spell the fabling rhyme;
 To view the festive rites, the knightly play,
 That deck’d heroic Albion’s elder day;
 To mark the mould’ring halls of barons bold,
 And the rough castle, cast in giant mould;
 With Gothic manners, Gothic arts explore,
 And muse on the magnificence of yore.

“ But chief, enraptur’d, have I lov’d to roam,
 A ling’ring votary, the vaulted dome,

Where the tall shafts, that mount in massy pride,
Their mingling branches shoot from side to side ;
Where elfin sculptors with fantastic clew,
O'er the long roof their wild embroid'ry drew ;
Where Superstition, with capricious hand,
In many a maze the wreathed window plann'd,
With hues romantic ting'd the gorgeous pane,
To fill with holy light the wondrous fane ;
To aid the builder's model, richly rude,
By no Vitruvian symmetry subdued ;
To suit the genius of the mystic pile :
Whilst, as around the far retiring aisle
And fletted shrines, with hoary trophies hung,
Her dark illumination wide she flung,
With new solemnity, the nooks profound,
The caves of death, and the dim arches frown'd.
From bliss long felt unwillingly we part ;—
Ah! spare the weakness of a lover's heart!
Chace not the phantoms of my fairy dream,
Phantoms that shrink at Reason's painful gleam !
That softer touch, insidious artist, stay,
Nor to new joys my struggling breast betray !

“ Such was a pensive bard's mistaken strain. - -
But oh! of ravish'd pleasures why complain?
No more the matchless skill I call unkind
That strives to disenchant my cheated mind.
For when again I view thy chaste design,
The just proportion and the genuine line ;
Those native portraitures of Attic art,
That from the lucid surface seem to start ;
Those tints that steal no glories from the day,
Nor ask the sun to lend his streaming ray ;
The doubtful radiance of contending dyes,
That faintly mingle yet distinctly rise ;
'Twiixt light and shade the transitory strife ;
The feature blooming with immortal life ;
The stole in casual foldings taught to flow,
Not with ambitious ornaments to glow ;
The tread majestic, and the beaming eye
That, lifted, speaks its commerce with the sky :

Sudden, the sombrous imag'ry is fled,
 Which late my visionary rapture fed :
 Thy powerful hand has broke the Gothic chain,
 And brought my bosom back to truth again :
 To truth, whose bold and unresisted aim
 Checks frail caprice, and fashion's fickle claim ;
 To truth, whose charms deception's magic quell,
 And bind coy fancy in a stronger spell.

“ Ye brawny prophets, that in robes so rich,
 At distance due, possess the crisped niche ;
 Ye rows of patriarchs that, sublimely rear'd,
 Diffuse a proud primeval length of beard ;
 Ye saints, who, clad in crimson's bright array,
 More pride than humble poverty display ;
 Ye virgins meek, that wear the palmy crown
 Of patient faith, and yet so fiercely frown ;
 Ye angels, that from golden clouds recline,
 But boast no semblance to a race divine ;
 Ye tragic tales of legendary lore,
 That draw devotion's ready tear no more ;
 Ye martyrdoms of unenlightened days,
 Ye miracles, that now no wonder raise ;
 Shapes that with one broad glare the gazer strike !
 Kings, bishops, nuns, apostles, all alike !
 Ye colours, that th' unwary sight amaze,
 And only dazzle in the noontide blaze ;
 No more the sacred window's round disgrace,
 But yield to Grecian groupes the shining space,
 Lo ! from the canvass Beauty shifts her throne,
 Lo ! Picture's powers a new formation own !
 Behold, she prints upon the crystal plain,
 With her own energy, th' expressive stain !
 The mighty master spreads his mimic toil
 More wide, nor only blends the breathing oil ;
 But calls the lineaments of life complete
 From genial alchemy's creative heat ;
 Obedient forms to the bright fusion gives,
 While in the warm enamel Nature lives.
 Artist ! 'tis thine, from the broad window's height,
 To add new lustre to religious light :

Not of its pomp to strip this ancient shrine,
But bid that pomp with purer radiance shine:
With arts unknown before, to reconcile
The willing Graces to the Gothic pile."

In this, the concluding passage is justly applicable to Mr. Jervis, who so dexterously executed the mechanical part of Sir Joshua's exquisite designs; and thus gave to the great master's work a *degree* of immortality, which may *perhaps* outlive the *canvass*.

With respect to this so justly admired Nativity, at New College chapel, Oxford, a weak critic, at the time, pointed out what he conceived to be an error of Sir Joshua, in his treatment of the subject, as follows:—

"He tells us" (alluding to Sir Joshua's remarks, in his journey to Flanders and Holland) "that, except in ludicrous subjects, none of the personages of the picture ought to be represented as looking out of it—his Nativity, therefore, according to this rule, is a ludicrous subject, as Joseph is looking at the spectator, and pointing to the infant."

This critic does not seem to understand the strict propriety of this action. Joseph is not to point out the holy child to those persons represented in the picture, who are supposed to come prepared to adore it. He looks *out* of the picture on the world, and directs them to behold their Redeemer.

Thus we see, that the finest inventions may be thrown away when addressed to a vulgar mind.

The second discourse delivered this year, on the 11th of December, was the tenth in succession; and in this Sir Joshua, stepping out of what may strictly be termed his own line of art, investigated the objects, form, and character of Sculpture, which he considered as possessing but one style; he also noticed the ineffectual attempts of sculptors, of the present day, to improve the art, arising partly from the costume of modern times not being so well suited to execution as that of the classic ages.

He commenced by explaining his reasons for not having sooner noticed this particular branch of art, on the principle that Painting is much more extensive and complicated than Sculpture, and affords, therefore, a more ample field for criticism; and consequently, as the greater includes the less, the leading principles of sculpture are comprized in those of painting. The former he considered as an art of much more simplicity and uniformity than the latter, as it cannot with propriety, or the best effect, be applied to many subjects; the objects of its pursuit being comprized in two words, *Form* and *Character*, which qualities can be presented in one manner, or in one style, only.

He then noticed, that the sculptors of the last age, not having attended sufficiently to the dis-

crimination of the several styles of painting, have been led into many errors; so that when they endeavoured to copy the picturesque effects, contrasts, or petty excellencies of whatever kind, which not improperly find a place in the inferior branches of painting, they doubtless imagined themselves improving and extending the boundaries of their art by this imitation; but, on the contrary, Sir Joshua was of opinion, that they were in reality, violating its essential character, by giving a different direction to its operations, and proposing to themselves either what is unattainable, or at best a meaner object of pursuit. "The grave and austere character of Sculpture," says he, "requires the utmost degree of formality in composition; picturesque contrasts have here no place; every thing is carefully weighed and measured, one side making almost an exact equipoise to the other: a child is not a proper balance to a full grown figure, nor is a figure sitting or stooping a companion to an upright figure."

He further laid it down as a principle, that the excellence of every art must consist in the complete accomplishment of its purpose, but that all false imitations of nature, arising from a mean ambition of producing a picturesque effect or illusion of any kind, thereby degrading that grandeur of ideas which the art ought to excite, must be strictly guarded against. This he exemplified in a familiar manner, by observing, that if the busi-

ness of Sculpture were only to administer pleasure to ignorance, or a mere entertainment to the senses, then the Venus de Medicis might certainly receive much improvement by colour; “but the character of Sculpture makes it her duty to afford delight of a different, and, perhaps, of a higher kind—the delight resulting from the contemplation of perfect beauty; and this, which is in truth an intellectual pleasure, is in many respects incompatible with what is merely addressed to the senses, such as that with which ignorance and levity contemplate elegance of form.”

In the progress of this discourse, Sir Joshua stated some other truths which are of that general tenor and import to deserve a place here. “What *Grace* is,” said he, “how it is to be acquired or conceived, are in speculation difficult questions; but *causa latet, res est notissima*: without any perplexing inquiry, the effect is hourly perceived. I shall only observe, that its natural foundation is correctness of design; and though grace may be sometimes *united* with incorrectness, it cannot *proceed* from it.”

Another observation may be no less interesting and important to the general reader. “It may be remarked, that Grace, Character, and Expression, though words of different sense and meaning, and so understood when applied to the works of painters, are indiscriminately used when we speak of Sculpture. This indecision we may expect to

proceed from the undetermined effects of the art itself; those qualities are exhibited in Sculpture, rather by form and attitude, than by the features, and can therefore be expressed but in a very general manner.”

The happy manner which Sir Joshua possessed of drawing moral reflections from the excellencies of art, and of thereby extending the usefulness of his instruction, was exemplified in his conclusion, when he observed, that there is no circumstance which more distinguishes a well regulated and sound taste, than a settled uniformity of design, where all the parts are compact, and fitted to each other, every thing being of a piece. “This principle extends itself to all habits of life, as well as to all works of art.” From these general grounds, then, he drew his inference that the uniformity and simplicity of the materials, on which the sculptor labours, prescribe bounds to his art, and teach him to confine himself to a proportionate simplicity of design.

1781.

ÆTAT. 57.

SIR JOSHUA'S exertions for the exhibition in 1781, were principally confined to three paintings, of which Dr. Beattie thus observes in a letter written from London in the May of that year, “The exhibition of pictures is the best of the kind I

have seen. The best pieces, in my opinion are, *Thais* (with a torch in her hand); the *Death of Dido*; and a *Boy*, supposed to be listening to a wonderful story; these are by Sir Joshua Reynolds." I do not, indeed, insert this criticism as a support to Sir Joshua's fame, but rather for the purpose of noticing a fact, not generally known, that Sir Joshua's *literary* aid was not neglected by his *literary friends*; a fact completely at variance with those critics who have thought proper to deny him the merit of writing his own discourses; and which is proved by a passage in a letter of Beattie to the Duchess of Gordon.

Beattie was at this very period preparing his "Essay on Beauty" for the press, and in this he seems evidently to have consulted Sir Joshua; for in a letter to the Duchess of Gordon he says, "However, one must keep one's word; and as your Grace desired to see this Essay, and I promised to send it, (as soon as I could get it transcribed,) I send it accordingly. I should not give you the trouble to return it, if I had not promised a reading of it to Sir Joshua Reynolds."

Sir Joshua, indeed, seems to have been applied to by his friends on all occasions; and by none oftener than by Dr. Johnson, particularly for charitable purposes.

Of this there is an instance, in a note of Johnson's, preserved in his life, too honourable to him to be here omitted.

“ TO SIR JOSHUA REYNOLDS.

“ DEAR SIR,

“ It was not before yesterday that I received your splendid benefaction. To a hand so liberal in distributing, I hope no one will envy the power of acquiring. I am, Dear Sir,

“ Your most obliged and most humble servant,
“ *June 23, 1781.* “ SAM. JOHNSON.”

A few days afterwards, Johnson received from Miss Frances Reynolds (a lady for whom he was always known to have had a very high regard,) a copy of a work written by her, privately printed, but never published, called an “ Essay on Taste.” In return for this he sent her the following letter:

“ TO MRS. FRANCES REYNOLDS.

“ DEAREST MADAM,

“ There is, in these few pages, or remarks, such depth of penetration, such nicety of observation, as Locke or Pascal might be proud of. This I desire you to believe is my real opinion.

“ However, it cannot be published in its present state. Many of your notions seem not to be very clear in your own mind; many are not sufficiently developed and expanded for the common reader: it wants every where to be made smoother and plainer.

“ You may, by revisal and correction, make it a very elegant and a very curious work.

“ I am, my dearest dear,

“ Your affectionate and obedient servant,

“ SAMUEL JOHNSON.”

“ *Bolt Court, June, 28, 1781.*”

Having mentioned this work written by Miss Reynolds, and submitted to Dr. Johnson, for his opinion respecting its publication, it may not be uninteresting if a few specimens of it are here inserted.

“ A fine tragedy, in the reading, is like a fine drawing by a great master; but when exhibited on the stage, seems as if it had been coloured by a vulgar hand to make it appear natural.”

“ A man, subject to anger, is, beyond all comparison, to be preferred to him who is never angry.”

“ The fine arts comprehend all that is excellent in the moral system, and, at the same time, open every path that tends to the corruption of moral excellence.”

“ Without the liberal arts the human powers rest below their proper line of cultivation; with them, they transgress too far beyond it.”

“ The fine arts are the proper amusements of the virtuous, but probably were never brought to any great degree of excellence by the virtuous, unless the actuating motive was necessity.”

“ The love of fame, of wealth, and of power are, in general, the grand incentives to the practice of the fine arts, and at the same time the greatest impediments to their improvement.”

“ The liberal arts, perhaps, never arrive at any degree of excellence in any nation in which the influence of wealth and luxury have previously prevailed ; for their fundamental principles are the *virtues*.”

“ The fine arts (particularly painting) are as mirrors reflecting the charms of nature, which few are capable of seeing in nature herself.”

“ Bashfulness denotes strong sensibility, and seems to waver between pride and humility.”

“ Dress is the strong indication of the moral character.”

“ Benefits strengthen the ties of virtuous friendship ; but where there is a deficiency of virtue, generally have a contrary effect.”

“ A family, reared in indigence, is often rich in reciprocal affections ; but affluence gives to hirelings those tender offices which endear parents, children, brothers, and sisters to each other.”

“ To lead the fashion indicates little merit, not to follow it still less.”

“ Love probably never exists without admiration. Bruyere observes, that none pass from friendship to love ; probably because a thorough acquaintance, which fixes friendship, extinguishes admiration.”

“Patience originates either from philosophy or from religion; and therefore may be said to be the offspring of pride or of humility.

“True politeness cannot be the concomitant of a weak or a vicious mind.”

“The love of praise, in a female breast, should never transcend the domestic sphere; perhaps the most perfect feminine mind habitually aims at nothing higher than an exemption from blame.”

“There is always something respectable in the object that excites the strongest ridicule, otherwise it would want the contrast which makes it ridiculous.”

As we are speaking of Miss Frances Reynolds, it brings to my recollection her once mentioning an intimate friend of her's, a lady of great virtue, integrity, and prudence, although but of a common degree of intellect, of whom she said, “I do not consider Mrs. — as a person of much power of mind, yet, in any difficulty, if I ask her advice, that which she gives is always sure to be right, although she cannot give the reason.”*

The reason seems to be, that this lady always acted from the accumulated experience of the world, which, with her, became a rule of conduct like instinct; but she never ventured to act much

* Miss Frances Reynolds, sister to Sir Joshua, died at her house in Queen's Square, St. James's Park, at the advanced age of eighty years, on the first of November, 1807.

from her own suggestions, because she apprehended her own weakness.

On the contrary, it too often happens, that when we ask the advice of a genius, his fertile imagination is his own director, and his mind suggests a thousand brilliant ideas, totally new, but which never having had their effects proved by trial, may very probably lead to difficulties if adopted. Those who follow the beaten path of the world are therefore more likely to go safely through it than those who are led into a new road by the greatest genius.

The fate of genius is uncertain; like gaming; it may lead to riches, or to poverty and wretchedness.

I remember a speech of the Rev. Lawrence Sterne, when he was informed that a friend of his, a man of great capacity, had married his maid-servant; "Ah!" said he, "I always thought my friend, Mr. —— was a man of genius; as none but a genius would have done so."

To return to the subject of the Exhibition of this year, I may remark, that this picture of *Thais* gave rise, but very unjustly, to some attempts at scandalous anecdote. In a periodical work of the time, it was noticed that this picture was highly admired; that the painter had caught the very spirit of the heroine, and that she seemed rushing from the canvass to destroy Persepolis.

The critic then observed, that there was an anecdote hanging on this picture, which was cir-

culated by the enemies of Sir Joshua when he exhibited it; but this the writer very properly refused to give credit to, as a thing derogatory to Sir Joshua's general conduct and feelings. "The whisper insisted that the face of this picture was painted for the famous Emily Bertie, that she paid him seventy-five guineas down, and was to pay him the like sum when the picture was finished, which she was unable to do; the picture remained with Sir Joshua some time, when he, finding it not called for, took it into his head to metamorphose Emily Bertie into Thais, and exhibit her to the world in her proper character, rushing with a torch to set the Temple of Chastity on fire." He then adds, that "the truth of the matter is, Sir Joshua has now got the picture of the lovely Emily in his collection, and Thais has no kind of connexion with it, except that of two faces in a small degree resembling each other." To which I can add, from my own knowledge, that the whole story is an entire fabrication of folly; for Sir Joshua never painted any person of the name of Emily Bertie. The portrait in the character of Thais was painted in the year 1776, the head only, on a whole length canvass, from a beautiful young girl who was known by the name of Emily Coventry; she afterwards accompanied a gentleman to the East Indies, and there died young.

The picture was not finished till the year 1781, and then sold to Mr. G——for one hundred gui-

neas ; it is now in the possession of the Earl of Dysart, and is particularly excellent.

The other, a picture of *Dido*, was much admired, and drew immense crowds to the Exhibition, exciting the applause not only of Englishmen, but of the most judicious foreigners, by the beauty of the countenance and the extreme richness of the colouring.

In the month of July, 1781, Sir Joshua set off, in company with his friend Mr. Metcalf, for the Continent, with the intention of examining the various celebrated productions of the Dutch and Flemish schools.

The two friends left London on the 24th, and proceeded in a post chaise for Margate, where they embarked for Ostend, and from the latter place they took the route of Ghent, Brussels, and thence to Mechlin, at which city Sir Joshua paid particular attention to the altar-piece in the cathedral, the work of Rubens, and of which he related an anecdote illustrative of that artist's manner of proceeding in his large works. This anecdote has been given more at length in the notes written by himself on the various productions of the pencil seen in this tour, published in his works, and which, indeed, were taken with the intention of drawing up a sketch of the tour for the press, but this he never proceeded further in than the writing a few introductory paragraphs ad-

dressed to his companion to whom he meant to dedicate it.

It seems that a citizen of Mechlin having bespoke this picture for the cathedral, was anxious to avoid the danger of its removal, and therefore requested Rubens to paint it in the church, to which he assented, as his own country seat at Stein was in the vicinity of that city. He, as usual, completed his sketch in colours, and intrusted one of his scholars, of the name of Van Egmont, with the task of dead colouring the canvass for the great picture at Mechlin, from this sketch.

The person who bespoke it, on receiving notice of this circumstance, immediately stopped Van Egmont's labours, exclaiming that he had engaged for a picture from the hand of the master and not of the scholar. However, as Sir Joshua adds, Rubens satisfied him that this was always his method of proceeding; and that this piece would be as completely his work as if he had done the whole from the beginning. "The citizen was satisfied, and Rubens proceeded with the picture, which appears to me to have no indications of neglect in any part; on the contrary, I think it *has been* one of his best pictures, though those who know this circumstance pretend to see Van Egmont's inferior genius transpire through Rubens' touches."

From Mechlin, the travellers proceeded to Antwerp, and having seen almost every thing curious

in Flanders, set off for Holland, where they visited Dort, the Hague, thence to Leyden, and Amsterdam, from whence they made a short excursion into Germany, crossing the Rhine near Dusseldorf, at which latter place Sir Joshua records a curious pictorial anecdote.

Being much pleased with the easy access to the famous Dusseldorf Gallery, and with the liberty of staying in it as long as he chose, and also with the extreme facilities afforded to students, many of whom he found copying in the gallery, and others in a large room, above stairs, expressly allotted for that purpose, Sir Joshua mentioned his great satisfaction at this liberal arrangement to the keeper, Mr. Kraye; but this gentleman informed him that although it was the Elector's wish to afford the most perfect accommodation to *visitors*, yet in regard to the students, he took some credit to himself; for when he first asked the Elector's permission for their copying the pictures, that prince refused the boon, asserting, that the copies would be offered for sale as originals, which multiplication would deteriorate the value of his collection. To this unfounded objection, Mr. Kraye answered, that painters capable of taking such copies as might pass for originals, were not likely to do so, as their time was fully occupied on originals of their own, and that the copies of the young students could not hurt his originals, as they could only impose upon the ignorant

whose opinions were below his Highness's attention. To this he added the very forcible argument, that if the Elector wished to produce artists in his own country, the refusal of such advantages to the student would be most unwise, and exactly on a parity with a person who should pretend to be a patron of literature, and yet in his attempts to produce scholars should refuse them the use of a library. To reasoning so plain and simple, the Elector must have been stupid indeed if he had refused assent, and Mr. Kraye had *carte blanche* accorded to him in favour of the youthful pupils.

From Dusseldorf, the two friends proceeded for Aix-la-Chapelle, and Liege; thence by the way of Brussels to Ostend, where they re-embarked, and landing at Margate, arrived, on Sunday the 16th of September, at the metropolis.

Whilst at Antwerp, Sir Joshua had taken particular notice of a young man of the name of De Gree, who had exhibited some considerable talents as a painter. His father was a taylor, and he himself had been intended for some clerical office, but as it is said by a late writer, having formed a different opinion of his religion than was intended, from the books put into his hand by an Abbé who was his patron, it was discovered that he would not do for a priest, and the Abbé therefore articed him to Gerrards of Antwerp. Sir Joshua received him, on his arrival in England, with much kindness, and even recommended to him most strongly

to pursue his profession in the metropolis; but De Gree was unwilling to consent to this, as he had been previously engaged by Mr. Latouche to proceed to Ireland. Even here Sir Joshua's friendly attentions did not cease, for he actually made the poor artist a present of fifty guineas to fit him for his Hibernian excursion, the whole of which, however, the careful son sent over to Antwerp for the use of his aged parents.

I have not been able to procure any further information respecting Reynolds' pictorial tour, but I cannot omit some good observations, written in a fragment of an intended dedication to the friend who was his companion in the journey to Flanders and Holland.

“The pleasure,” he says, “that a mere dilettante derives from seeing the works of art, ceases when he has received the full effect of each performance; but the painter has the means of amusing himself much longer, by investigating the principles on which the artist wrought.

———“Nor is it an inconsiderable advantage to see such works in company with one who has a general rectitude of taste, and is not a professor of the art. We are too apt to forget that the art is not intended solely for the pleasure of professors. The opinions of others are certainly not to be neglected; since, by their means, the received rules of art may be corrected: at least a species of benefit may be obtained, which we are not likely to de-

rive from the judgment of painters ; who, being educated in the same manner, are likely to judge from the same principles, are liable to the same prejudices, and may sometimes be governed by the influence of an authority, which perhaps has no foundation in nature.”

About this time Mr. Opie came first to settle in London, accompanied by his friend Dr. Wolcot, when the novelty and originality of his manner in his pictures, added to his great abilities, drew an universal attention from the connoisseurs, and he was immediately surrounded and employed by all the principal nobility of England. I remember that Sir Joshua himself compared him to Carravagio.

However, it is curious to observe the changes which frequently happen in the course of a very short period, and if we oftener made this the subject of our reflection, remembering *that good or bad* fortune cannot be eternal, it would have a great tendency to check our vanity in prosperity, and give us consolation even in situations apparently the most forlorn : for, in a very little space of time, that capricious public who had so violently admired and employed Opie, when he first appeared, and was a novelty among them, and was, in reality, only the embryo of a painter, yet, when he had proved himself to be a real artist, left him with disgust because he was a novelty no longer. They now looked out for his defects alone, and he be-

came in his turn totally neglected and forgotten; and instead of being the sole object of public attention, and having the street, where he lived, so crowded with coaches of the nobility as to become a real nuisance to the neighbourhood, so, as he jestingly observed to me, that he thought he must place cannon at his door to keep the multitude off from it, he now found himself as entirely deserted as if his house had been infected with the plague.—Such is the world!

He, afterwards, by painting some fine historical pictures for the Shakspeare gallery, &c., became again the object of moderate attention and employment, gained by his own shew of merit; but not like the first onset, for the world are never infatuated twice by the same object.

It was an observation made to me by old Mr. Wilton, the statuary, that he thought Sir Joshua Reynolds was the only eminent painter that had been able to call back the public to himself after they had grown tired of him, and which he had done more than once. This Vandyke could not accomplish; but when he was deserted in England, as one who had been too long the object of attention, went over to Paris in hope to gain employment there; yet even there he was no novelty: and, it not answering his expectations, he returned to England, where he soon after died, which leaves it uncertain what would have been the consequence had he survived.

Yet certain it is, that Sir Joshua was not much employed in portraits after Romney grew into fashion, although the difference between those painters was so immense. For the world, as we in general term it, is in this respect just like a child that will fling away the most valuable jewel after having become familiar with it, to grasp at a toy however worthless, if it has but novelty to recommend it.

We have to regret that Mr. Opie died at an early period of his life, and before he had time fully to make the trial of winning a second time the capricious world to appreciate justly those abilities, which will ever rank him among the first of English painters.

I knew him very well; and I shall take the liberty to insert in this place the following character, which I wrote immediately on his death, and which is my true opinion of him.

“ JOHN OPIE, Esq., R. A.

“ Professor of Painting to the Royal Academy.

“ Died April 9th, 1807.

“ A man whose intellectual powers, and indefatigable industry in their cultivation, rendered him at once an honour to the country from which he originated, and an example of imitation to mankind.

“ Born in a rank of life in which the road to eminence is rendered infinitely difficult, unas-

sisted by partial patronage, scorning, with virtuous pride, all slavery of dependence, he trusted alone for his reward to the force of his natural powers, and to well directed and unremitting study; and he demonstrated, by his works, how highly he was endowed by nature with strength of judgement and originality of conception. His thoughts were always new and striking, as they were the genuine offspring of his own mind; and it is difficult to say if his conversation gave more amusement or instruction.

“The toil or difficulties of his profession were by him considered as matter of honourable and delightful contest; and it might be said of him that he did not so much paint to live, as live to paint.

“As a son he was an example of duty to an aged parent. He was studious yet not severe; he was eminent yet not vain: his disposition so tranquil and forgiving, that it was the reverse of every tincture of sour or vindictive; and what to some might have appeared as roughness of manner, was only the effect of an honest indignation towards that which he conceived to be error.

“How greatly have we cause to lament that so much talent, united to so much industry, perseverance, and knowledge, should have been prematurely snatched from the world, which it would have delighted with its powers, and benefited by its example!”

J. N.

Of the opinion of connoisseurs concerning Sir Joshua, we may form some idea from the numerous compliments which were paid him, at this crisis.

Mr. Nichols in his life of Hogarth, whilst speaking of that artist's attempt to paint a *Sigismunda*, which should surpass that of Corregio now at the Duke of Newcastle's at Clumber Park, says that, "to express a sorrow like that of *Tancred's* (Sifredi's) daughter, few modern artists are fully qualified, if we except, indeed, Sir Joshua Reynolds, with whose pencil Beauty in all her forms, and the Passions in all their varieties, are equally familiar."

The *London Courant* in the same year also speaks of "Sir Joshua Reynolds, whose works, the acknowledged patterns of grace and expression, conduce not more to excite emulation, than his lectures serve to instruct the students in the solid principles of design and composition." To which I may justly add some observations from a Preface to *Imitations of Drawings*, by Mr. Rogers, in which it is expressed "how happy it is for the Academy to have for its first President a genius who feels, and is sensible of the necessity of enlarging the ideas of youth, by placing before them the works of the great masters; who teaches them to disregard the tinsel of the last age, but eagerly to search after the rich ore of that of Leo X., and who directs them in the proper method of bringing the golden fleece out of Italy into his Majesty's dominions."

1782.

ÆTAT 58.

WITH such a fame, particularly among the eminent for talents, it is not surprising that all the friends of Sir Joshua were much alarmed at a slight paralytic affection which, after an almost uninterrupted course of good health for many years, attacked him at this period. This was but slight, however, and its effects were completely removed in the space of a few weeks, to the great happiness of all who knew him, but perhaps of none more than Dr. Johnson, who wrote him the following letter on the occasion.

“ DEAR SIR,

“ I heard yesterday of your late disorder, and should think ill of myself if I had heard of it without alarm. I heard likewise of your recovery, which I sincerely wish to be complete and permanent. Your country has been in danger of losing one of its brightest ornaments, and I of losing one of my oldest and kindest friends : but I hope you will still live long, for the honour of the nation ; and that more enjoyment of your elegance, your intelligence, and your benevolence, is still reserved for,

“ Dear Sir,

“ Your most affectionate, &c.

“ SAM. JOHNSON.”

Brighthelmstone, Nov. 14, 1782.

It was not, however, to his partial friends alone that Sir Joshua was dear : for in this very year we find him praised by an universal satirist ; one who, with original humour, had magnified the most unimportant actions of royalty into foibles, and foibles into follies ; it is unnecessary to add the name of Peter Pindar, who was indeed an excellent critic on art, and amused himself occasionally in landscape painting, and was therefore the better qualified to judge of the excellencies of Sir Joshua.

In his Lyric Odes of this year, he has several allusions to the President of the Academy.

“ Close by them hung Sir Joshua’s matchless pieces’—
Works ! that a Titian’s hand could form alone—
Works ! that a Rubens had been proud to own.”

And again in his Farewell Odes, nearly of the same date, he advises a painter to

“ Be pleased like Reynolds to direct the blind,
Who aids the feeble faltering feet of youth ;
Unfolds the ample volume of his mind,
With genius stor’d and Nature’s simple truth.”

Exclaiming also in another part—

“ Lo, Reynolds shines with undiminish’d ray !
Keeps, like the bird of Jove, his distant way :
Yet, simple Portrait strikes too oft our eyes,
Whilst History, anxious for his pencil, sighs.”

To the foregoing on the subject of art, I take

the liberty to add some other lines by the same well-known poet, and which have never before appeared in print.

ADVICE TO YOUNG PAINTERS. BY PETER PINDAR.

Study Sir Joshua's works, young men ;—
 Not pictures only, but his pen :
 Who, when Cimmerician darkness whelm'd our isle,
 Appear'd a comet in his art ;—
 Bid nature from the canvass start,
 And with the Graces bade that canvass smile.

Could Titian from his tomb arise,
 And cast on Reynolds' art his eyes,
 How would he heave of jealousy the groan !
 Here possibly I may mistake ;
 As Titian probably might take
 The works of our great master for his own.

As a further proof of the high opinion which Dr. Wolcot entertained of Sir Joshua's merits, I shall give an extract from a letter of his to a friend.

“ As nothing affords you a higher treat than something relative to Reynolds, be informed then of what will excite your envy.

“ I lately breakfasted with him at his house in Leicester-fields. After some desultory remarks on the old masters, but not one word of the living artists (as on that subject one can never obtain his real opinion), the conversation turned on Dr. Johnson. On my asking him how the club, to which he belonged, could so patiently suffer the

tyranny of this overbearing man, he replied, with a smile, that the members often hazarded sentiments merely to try his powers in contradiction.

“ I think I in some measure wounded the feelings of Reynolds, by observing that I had often thought that the Ramblers were Idlers, and the Idlers Ramblers, (except those papers which he (Reynolds) had contributed; and further, that Johnson too frequently acted the reverse of gipsies:—“ The gipsies,” said I, “ when they steal the children of gentlefolks, conceal the theft by beggarly disguises, whereas Johnson often steals common thoughts, disguising the theft by a pomp of language.

“ Happening to be in company with Dr. Johnson, and observing to him that his portrait by Reynolds was not sufficiently dignified: prepared with a flat contradiction, he replied, in a kind of bull-dog growl, “ No, Sir!—the pencil of Reynolds never wanted dignity nor the Graces.”

“ It is a lucky thing for an artist to be possessed of the favour of the fashionable world; fortune then shows no objection towards a co-operation with his labours.—Reynolds avails himself of this circumstance; and in spite of rivals and a too great mortality of colours, stands his ground like a Hercules, and defies envy, hatred, and malice; in short, all the virulent attacks made on his performances.”

Such praises, from such an author, may well be considered as sincere and genuine.

Sir Joshua was sufficiently recovered from his late illness to give his usual discourse on the 10th of December, the objects of which, at this period, were the investigation of Genius, and the proof that it refers to the forming of general ideas only, and consists principally in the comprehension of a grand whole.

The generally received opinion of the worth of Genius, he exemplified by the position that it was the height of every artist's ambition, who, so long as he could procure the addition of the supposed possession of this quality to his name, will always patiently bear any imputation of incorrectness, of carelessness, and in short, of any other defect.

The extravagant length to which this desire may be sometimes carried, he instanced by saying that some go such lengths as to trace its indication in absolute faults, not only excusing such faults on account of genius, but actually presuming genius from their existence.

As this discourse was more specifically addressed to artists than to the world in general, I shall not examine it further than to introduce his definition of genius as applied to a painter; where he says, "this Genius consists, I conceive, in the power of expressing that which employs your pencil, whatever it may be, as *a whole*; so that the general effect and power of the whole may take possession of the mind, and for a while suspend the consideration of the subordinate and particu-

lar beauties or defects.”—In addition to which, he concluded his discourse, by stating, that “the great business of study is, to form a *mind*, adapted and adequate to all times and all occasions; to which all nature is then laid open, and which may be said to possess the key of her inexhaustible riches.”

1783.

ÆTAT. 59.

IN the beginning of this year the Academy suffered a very considerable loss in the death of its able and active keeper; and one to whom the Institution, in a great degree, owed its establishment. The demise of Mr. Moser, the first person who held the office in the Royal Academy, was honoured by Sir Joshua, in a public testimonial to his memory, which was inserted in the newspapers of the day: the character is justly given by his sincere friend; and as it relates to the arts, as well as to the subject of our Memoir, cannot, with propriety, be omitted.

It is now given, (says Mr. Malone,) from a copy in Sir Joshua’s hand-writing.

Jan. 24, 1783.

“Yesterday died, at his apartments in Somerset-place, George Michael Moser, Keeper of the Royal Academy; aged seventy-eight years. He

was a native of Switzerland, but came to England very young, to follow the profession of a chaser in gold, in which art he has been always considered as holding the first rank. But his skill was not confined to this alone; he possessed an universal knowledge in all branches of painting and sculpture, which perfectly qualified him for the place that he held in the Academy, the business of which principally consists in superintending and instructing the students, who draw or model from the antique figures.

“ His private character deserves a more ample testimony than this transient memorial. Few have passed a more inoffensive, or, perhaps, a more happy life; if happiness, or enjoyment of life, consists in having the mind always occupied, always intent upon some useful art, by which fame and distinction may be acquired. Mr. Moser’s whole attention was absorbed, either in practice, or something that related to the advancement of art. He may truly be said, in every sense, to have been the father of the present race of artists; for long before the Royal Academy was established, he presided over the little societies which met first in Salisbury-court, and afterwards in St. Martin’s-lane, where they drew from living models. Perhaps nothing that can be said will more strongly imply his amiable disposition, than that all the different societies with which he has been connected, have always turned their eyes

upon him for their treasurer and chief manager; when, perhaps, they would not have contentedly submitted to any other authority. His early society was composed of men whose names are well known in the world; such as Hogarth, Rysbrach, Roubiliac, Willis, Ellis, Vanderbank, &c.

“ Though he had outlived all the companions of his youth, he might, to the last, have boasted of a succession equally numerous; for all that knew him were his friends.

“ When he was appointed Keeper of the Royal Academy, his conduct was exemplary, and worthy to be imitated by whoever shall succeed him in that office. As he loved the employment of teaching, he could not fail of discharging that duty with diligence. By the propriety of his conduct he united the love and respect of the students; he kept order in the Academy, and made himself respected, without the austerity or importance of office; all noise and tumult immediately ceased on his appearance; at the same time there was nothing forbidding in his manner, which might restrain the pupils from freely applying to him for advice or assistance.

“ All this excellence had a firm foundation: he was a man of sincere and ardent piety, and has left an illustrious example of the exactness with which the subordinate duties may be expected to be discharged by him whose first care is to please God.

“ He has left one daughter behind him, who has distinguished herself by the admirable manner in which she paints and composes pieces of flowers, of which many samples have been seen in the exhibitions. She has had the honour of being much employed in this way by their Majesties, and for her extraordinary merit has been received into the Royal Academy.”

This year Mr. Lowe,* the painter, was very much distressed that a large picture which he had painted was refused to be received into the Exhibition of the Royal Academy; and as he was intimate with, and much befriended by, Dr. Johnson, he immediately applied to him to use his interest with Sir Joshua in order to procure its admittance, on which Johnson sent the following letter to Sir Joshua Reynolds, which letter I have seen, and another to Mr. Barry, who at that time was one of the council.

“ TO SIR JOSHUA REYNOLDS.

“ SIR,

“ Mr. Lowe considers himself as cut off from all credit and all hope, by the rejection of his pic-

* Mr. Lowe was a natural son of the late Lord Sutherland, from whom he had an annuity. He was much esteemed by Dr. Johnson, who bequeathed him a legacy, and stood to one of his children as godfather. He was sent to Rome by the patronage of the Royal Academy, in consequence of his having gained the gold medal in 1771; and died, at an obscure lodging in Westminster, September 1793. Mr. Lowe was much dissatisfied with the small sum of fifty pounds a year while at Rome from the

ture from the Exhibition. Upon this work he has exhausted all his powers, and suspended all his expectations: and certainly, to be refused an opportunity of taking the opinion of the public is, in itself, a very great hardship. It is to be condemned without a trial.

If you could procure the revocation of this incapacitating edict, you would deliver an unhappy man from great affliction. The council has sometimes reversed its own determinations; and I hope that, by your interposition, this luckless picture may be got admitted.

“ I am, &c.,

“ SAM. JOHNSON.”

April 12, 1783.

“ TO JAMES BARRY, ESQ.

“ SIR,

“ Mr. Lowe’s exclusion from the Exhibition gives him more trouble than you and the other gentlemen of the council could imagine or intend. He considers disgrace and ruin as the inevitable consequence of your determination. He says, that some pictures have been received after rejection; and if there be any such precedent, I earnestly entreat that you will use your interest in his favour. Of his work I can say nothing: I pretend not to judge of painting; and this picture I never

Royal Academy, and the expenses of his journey paid; and when Sir Joshua said that he knew from experience that it was sufficient, Lowe pertly answered, “ that it was possible for a man to live on guts and garbage.”

saw : but I conceive it extremely hard to shut out any man from the possibility of success ; and therefore I repeat my request, that you will propose the re-consideration of Mr. Lowe's case ; and if there be any among the council with whom my name can have any weight, be pleased to communicate to them the desire of, Sir,

“ Your most humble Servant,
April 12, 1783. “ SAM. JOHNSON.”

Such intercession was too powerful to be resisted ; and Mr. Lowe's performance was admitted at Somerset-house, and exhibited there in an empty room. The subject was the Deluge, at that point of time when the water was rising to the top of the last uncovered mountain. Near to the spot was seen the last of the antediluvian race, exclusive of those who were saved in the ark of Noah. This was one of those giants, then the inhabitants of the earth, who had still strength to swim, and with one of his hands held aloft his infant child. Upon the small remaining dry spot appeared a famished lion ready to spring at the child and devour it. Mr. Lowe told Boswell that Dr. Johnson said to him, “ Sir, your picture is noble and probable.” “ A compliment, indeed,” said Mr. Lowe, “ from a man who cannot lie, and cannot be mistaken.”

In this speech of Mr. Lowe's we may perceive how easily and readily vanity or conceit can give

flattery to itself. That Johnson would not lie we will admit ; but, in his own letter to Barry he allows an ample field for mistake, as he confesses he knows nothing of the art, and that he had never seen the picture. I saw the picture myself when it was exhibited in an anti-room in the Academy, and then thought it had been much better for Mr. Lowe if he had complied with the first decree of the council ; for if the conception of the picture had been good, as Dr. Johnson insinuates, yet the execution of it was execrable beyond belief. Johnson was also mistaken in saying it was like condemning without a trial. On the contrary, Mr. Lowe had been tried, and by the fairest jury, that of his peers, those of the same profession ; and the world confirmed their decision to be just, as the picture, when shewn in public, was universally condemned.

This Mr. Mauritius Lowe was the pupil of Mr. Cipriani, but improved little under his tuition. He was also admitted a student of the Royal Academy among the first of those who entered that insitution. In this situation he made very slender advances in the art, being too indolent and inattentive to his studies to attain any excellence. But it is remarkable, that he was the person who obtained the gold medal first offered by the Royal Academy to the student who should produce the best historical picture. The subject given was Time discovering Truth.

If it be asked, how Mr. Lowe, though deficient as an artist, could obtain the medal? it may with truth be said, that he owed his success to the partiality of the Italian gentlemen, members of the Academy, who voted for him at the solicitation of Mr. Baretti, for whom Mr. Lowe had been a very favourable evidence on his trial in the year 1769: for it is very certain that Lowe's was not the best of the pictures offered for the premium.

Of this year's Exhibition Dr. Johnson gives some particulars in a letter to Mrs. Thrale, thus:

“On Saturday I dined, as is usual, at the opening of the Exhibition. Our company was splendid, whether more numerous than at any former time I know not. Our tables seem always full. On Monday, if I am told truth, were received at the door, one hundred and ninety pounds, for the admission of three thousand eight hundred spectators. Supposing the show open ten hours, and the spectators staying, one with another, each an hour, the rooms never had fewer than three hundred and eighty jostling against each other. Poor Lowe met with some discouragement; but I interposed for him, and prevailed.”

But Johnson's manners were actually so very uncouth, that he was not fit to dine in public; I remember the first time I ever had the pleasure to dine in company with him, which was at Sir Joshua's table, I was previously advised not to seem to observe him in eating, as his manner was very

slovenly at his meals, and he was very angry if he thought it was remarked.

The uncouth manner in which he fed himself was indeed remarkable. I well recollect when dining once at Sir Joshua's with him, he scalded his mouth by hastily and as awkwardly eating some of a beef steak pye when too hot; this, however, he passed off with a smile, saying that "beef steak pye would be a very good thing if it would ever be cold."

Mr. Barry seems at this period to have given vent to some of his spleen against Sir Joshua Reynolds, by a publication which is thus noticed by Dr. Johnson in a letter to Mrs. Thrale, on the 1st of May.—"Mr. Barry's exhibition was opened the same day, and a book is published to recommend it, which, if you read it, you will find it decorated with some satirical strictures on Sir Joshua Reynolds and others. I have not escaped. You must, however, think with some estimation of Barry for the comprehension of his design."

This attack of Barry's certainly arose from that morbid state of his own mind which made him often quarrel with his best friends, and which was perhaps heightened, at the present moment, by an idea that Sir Joshua's influence in the Academy was not in his favour.

If Sir Joshua's influence in the Royal Academy was great, it was most commonly justly exerted, and yet not always answerable to his desire: for I

remember to have heard him say, that although he was nominally king of the Academy, Sir William Chambers was the vice-roy over him; and at another time he said, "Those, who are of some importance every where else, find themselves nobody when they come to the Academy." However, from his station it was concluded that he had great influence, and on that supposition, on the following day after Johnson's note to Mrs. Thrale, we find the former soliciting the President's interest in favour of his friend Mr. Cruikshanks as candidate for the anatomical professorship: but his exertions in this instance, it is well known, were inefficacious.

"TO SIR JOSHUA REYNOLDS.

"DEAR SIR,

"The gentleman who waits on you with this is Mr. Cruikshanks, who wishes to succeed his friend, Dr. Hunter, as Professor of Anatomy in the Royal Academy. His qualifications are very generally known, and it adds dignity to the institution that such men are candidates. "I am Sir,

"Your most humble servant,

May 2d, 1783.

"SAM. JOHNSON."

Johnson, though confessedly ignorant of painting, seems however to have still been much interested in the success of the Academy, whose exhibitions were now arriving at a great pitch of perfection. In a note, written on the 8th of May, he says,

“ The exhibition prospers so much, that Sir Joshua says it will maintain the Academy: he estimates the probable amount at £3000.”

While Mr. Barry was engaged in his great work at the Adelphi Rooms, Mr. Penny resigned his situation of professor of painting in the Royal Academy, of which he had been possessed from the foundation of the institution, when Mr. Barry offered to fill the vacant chair and was elected to it in 1782. But he was not over diligent in preparing for the duties of his office; on which account Sir Joshua Reynolds made some remarks upon his conduct, to which Barry answered with great violence, saying, “ If I had no more to do in the composition of my lectures than to produce such poor flimsy stuff as your discourses, I should soon have done my work, and be prepared to read.” It is said this speech was delivered with his fist clenched in a menacing posture.”

Barry gave his first lecture March 2, 1784.

In this situation his turbulent disposition began to express itself. His lectures very soon became mere vehicles of invective and satire against the principal Academicians, and most pointedly against Sir Joshua, who was reduced by it to so awkward a situation in his chair as an auditor, that he was obliged at last either to appear to be asleep or to absent himself from the place. After the death of Sir Joshua, he bestowed high praise on him and great abuse on those who were still alive, till at length a regular charge was preferred against him,

and it was found to be absolutely necessary to dismiss him from the office of lecturer, and also from the Royal Academy in 1799.

Sir Joshua used to say that, as many of Barry's discoveries were new to himself, so he thought they were new to every body else.

Barry should have considered, that if it is a good thing to be wise, it is a very bad thing to think we are so.

But it appears by Barry's own confession many years afterwards that he both relented and repented of his absurd conduct towards Sir Joshua. When speaking of the gift which Burke made him of his pamphlet, entitled "On the cause of the present discontents," Barry says, "by the significant manner in which he gave it I have often thought since, that he wished, and meant me to read and consider, with due attention, the opinion he had formed of his own hopes and prospects; and how little reason I should have to expect him to be my stickler in any difference which might arise (and which he saw rising) between me and Sir Joshua, to whom, as he has often told me (and as has since appeared to the public by Sir Joshua's will,) he was under very considerable pecuniary obligations, and even at the very time he was obliging me in a similar way. Had I then rightly considered the matter, or had he ventured to be a little more explicit, my precipitate estrangement could not have taken place. But his acquaintance with

Sir Joshua Reynolds was of longer standing than his acquaintance with me; I was a continued trouble and expence to him, and could no longer bear the thought of continuing to render his house unpleasant by my frequent bickerings with Sir Joshua, who, to say the truth, acted somewhat weakly with respect to me; and, on the other side, I was myself much to blame with respect to him: my notions of candour and liberality between artists who were friends, were too juvenile, and romantically strained too high for human frailty in the general occurrences of life. Disappointed in not finding more in poor Sir Joshua, I was not then in a humour to make a just estimate of the many excellent qualities I might have really found in him. But there is nothing rightly appreciated without that comparison with other things of the same nature, which time and long experience only can enable us to make."

In the life of Barry, page 257, vol. i., will be found an anonymous letter to him, containing criticisms on painting as well as on poetry, and on his works at the Adelphi. It is, in my opinion, one of the most excellent critiques I ever met with. Barry appears not to have suspected who was the author of it: but the writer of his life says, "It seems to be, from every mark of internal evidence, the production of Burke."

My own opinion is, that it is a combination of the talents of Burke and Sir Joshua Reynolds;

for there are opinions contained in it that none but a painter could have given, and which are likewise the very opinions of Sir Joshua: there are also other parts in it evidently by Burke, and which none but himself could have written. Therefore, no doubt remains in my mind as to its authors, to both of whom it does equal honour: nay, Barry himself seems to have felt very grateful for the friendly advice contained in it, and was very solicitous to discover the enlightened author, but in vain.

As this letter contains so many of the genuine opinions of Sir Joshua, together with many exquisite and useful precepts for young artists, I cannot forego my desire to give the following extracts from it. At the same time, I have presumed to point out the different parts which have been done by each individually, according to my own firm belief: but this is only matter of opinion; others may think differently. Many parts of it appear to me to have been done in conjunction.

However, at any rate, it contains too good a lesson to be omitted in an artist's book, whoever may be its author. It seems but natural that Burke should ask the assistance of Sir Joshua in the affair, as it was always his desire to do every thing in his power for Barry's advantage; and he was also convinced that Sir Joshua could afford him much serviceable advice, of which he here seems to have availed himself.

“ The painter who wishes to make his pictures (what fine pictures must be) nature elevated and improved, must first of all gain a perfect knowledge of nature as it is ; before he endeavours, like Lysippus, to make men as they ought to be, he must know how to render them as they are ; he must acquire an accurate knowledge of all the parts of the body and countenance : to know anatomy will be of little use, unless physiology and physiognomy are joined with it, so that the artist may know what peculiar combinations and proportions of features constitute different characters, and what effect the passions and affections of the mind have upon these features. This is a science which all the theorists in the world cannot teach, and which can only be acquired by observation, practice, and attention. It is not by copying antique statues, or by giving a loose to the imagination in what are called poetical compositions, that artists will be enabled to produce works of real merit : but by laborious and accurate investigation of nature upon the principles observed by the Greeks, first to make themselves thoroughly acquainted with the common forms of nature ; and then, by selecting and combining, to form compositions according to their own elevated conceptions. This is the principle of true poetry, as well as of painting and sculpture. Homer and Shakspeare had probably never seen characters so strongly marked as those of Achilles and Lady

Macbeth ; at least we may safely say that few of their readers have, and yet we all feel that these characters are drawn from nature, and that if we have not seen exactly the same, we have seen models or miniatures of them. The limbs and features are those of common nature, but elevated and improved by the taste and skill of the artist. This taste may be the gift of nature, the result of perfect organization, and the skill may be acquired by habit and study ; but the ground-work, the knowledge of limbs and features, must be acquired by practical attention and accurate observation. And here, Sir, that portrait-painting which you affect so much to despise, is the best school that an artist can study in, provided he studies it, as every man of genius will do, with a philosophic eye, not with a view merely to copy the face before him, but to learn the character of it, with a view to employ in more important works what is good of it, and to reject what is not. It was in this view that the great painters of the Roman and Bolognese schools collected such numbers of studies of heads from nature, which they afterwards embellished and introduced in their pictures, as occasion required. Hence that boundless variety which is observable in their works.”—(*The above by Sir Joshua.*) *Vide his Preface to Ralph's Catalogue.*

“ I do not mean to recommend to the historical painter to make his works an assemblage of cari-

catures, like those of Hogarth and some of our present artists; but as there is scarcely any character so insipid that a Shakspeare or a Fielding would not have been able to discover something peculiar in, so there is scarcely any countenance so vacant, but that there are some trifling features which may be of use to a skilful and ingenious artist; though it seldom or ever happens that any character of countenance is sufficiently strong and perfect to serve of itself for the hero of a poem or picture, until it has been touched and embellished by the fostering hand of the poet or the painter.”
—(*Sir Joshua.*)

“Portrait painting may be to the painter what the practical knowledge of the world is to the poet, provided he considers it as a school by which he is to acquire the means of perfection in his art, and not as the object of that perfection.

“It was practical knowledge of the world which gave the poetry of Homer and Shakspeare that superiority which still exists over all other works of the same kind; and it was a philosophic attention to the imitation of common nature (which portrait-painting ought to be,) that gave the Roman and Bolognese schools their superiority over the Florentine, which excelled so much in theoretic knowledge of the art.”—(*Sir Joshua.*)

“I entirely agree with you, that the rage of the inhabitants of this country for having their phizzes perpetuated, whether they are worthy of it or not,

is one great obstacle to the advancement of art ; because it makes that branch more profitable than any other, and therefore makes many men of great talents consider it as the ultimate object of their art, instead of the means of that object. But there is another error on the contrary side not less fatal, which is the contempt our young artists are apt to entertain for the lower detail of nature, and the forward ambition which they all have of undertaking great things before they can do little ones—of making compositions before they are acquainted sufficiently with the constituent parts.” —(*Burke.*)

“ We are told that many ancient artists bestowed their whole lives upon a single composition —We are not to suppose that these great artists employed so many years in chipping one block of marble, but that the greatest part of the time was employed in studying nature, particularly the vast and intricate branches of physiology and pathology, in order to enable them to execute perfectly the great works which they had conceived.” —(*Sir Joshua.*)

“ It is not enough to know the forms, positions, and proportions of the constituent parts of the animal machine, but we should know the nice changes that are produced in them by the various affections of the mind, as grief, agony, rage, &c. ; without this we may producè splendid compositions and graceful figures, but we shall never ap-

proach that perfection to which the ancients arrived: a perfection to which I fear the very constitution of modern society is an insurmountable obstacle. Such a minister as Pericles might perhaps overcome it; but, considering the present system of education, it is scarcely possible that such a one should appear. To distinguish between what is good and what is bad falls to the lot of many, but to distinguish between what is barely good and what is truly excellent falls to the lot of few; and it very rarely happens that any of these few are kings and ministers, who are able and willing to reward an artist for giving up his whole time to one object, which he must do if he means to make it truly excellent.”—(*The above by Burke.*)

“There is another erroneous principle which seems to have crept into your book, which is extremely general in the present age, and is a principal cause of our faulty taste. This is the confounding greatness of size with greatness of manner, and imagining that extent of canvass or weight of marble can contribute to make a picture or a statue sublime. The only kind of sublimity which a painter or sculptor should aim at, is to express by certain proportions and positions of limbs and features, that strength and dignity of mind, and vigour and activity of body, which enable men to conceive and execute great actions: provided the space in which these are represented is large

enough for the artist to distinguish them clearly to the eye of the spectator, at the distance from which he intends his work to be seen, it is large enough. A space which extends beyond the field of vision only serves to distract and mislead the eye, and to divide the attention. The representation of gigantic and monstrous figures has nothing of sublimity either in poetry or painting, which entirely depends upon expression. When Claudian describes a giant taking a mountain on his shoulders, with a river running down his back, there is nothing sublime in it, for there is no great expression, but merely brute strength; but when Homer describes Achilles advancing to the walls of Troy, clad in celestial armour, like the autumnal star that brings fevers, plagues, and death, we see all the terrible qualities of that hero rendered still more terrible by being contrasted with the venerable figure of Priam standing upon the walls of Troy, and tearing his white hair at sight of the approaching danger. This is the true sublime; (*he must mean in poetry, for it would not be very sublime in painting;*) the other is trick and quackery. Any madman can describe a giant striding from London to York, or a ghost stepping from mountain to mountain; but it requires genius, and genius experienced in the ways of men, to draw a finished character with all the excellencies and excesses, the virtues and infirmities of a great and exalted mind, so that by turns we admire the

hero and sympathize with the man—exult and triumph in his valour and generosity, and shudder at his rage, and pity his distress. This is the Achilles of Homer; a character every-where to be seen in miniature, which the poet drew from nature, and then touched and embellished according to his own exalted ideas. Had he drawn him with great virtues and great abilities, without great passions, the character would have been unnatural, and of course uninteresting; for a vigorous mind is necessarily accompanied with violent passions, as a great fire with great heat. The same principle which guided Homer should guide the painter in studying after nature. He should attempt to copy, and not to create; and when his mind is sufficiently stored with materials, and his hand sufficiently exercised in art, then let him select and combine, and try to produce something superior to common nature, though copied from it. But let him not imagine, that because he can produce great things, he can therefore produce good things, or that when he has covered a great extent of canvass with bold and hasty sketches, he has produced a fine picture, or sublime composition. Such works, compared with the beautiful and animated compositions of the Bolognese school, put me in mind of Claudian's battle of the giants, compared with Virgil's battle of the bees. In the former all the objects are vast, but the action and expression extravagant and absurd, and

the whole cold and uninteresting. In the latter the objects are minute, but the action and expression bold and animated, and the whole together, warm, clear, and spirited.”—(*The above by Burke.*)

“ I have seen a large cartoon, copied from a little picture of the vision of Ezekiel by Raffaele, in which the copyist thought, without doubt, to expand and illustrate the idea of the author; but by losing the majesty of the countenances, which makes the original so sublime, notwithstanding its being in miniature, his colossal copy became ridiculous, instead of awful.”—(*The above by Sir Joshua.*)

“ It is with great concern I have observed of late years this taste for false sublime gaining ground in England, particularly among artists. I attribute it in a great measure to certain compositions, which have been extolled by interested prejudices, and admired by credulous ignorance, for no other reason than because they were not understood. Few readers take the trouble of judging for themselves; so that when a work is ushered into the world with great pomp, and under the sanction of great names, its real merits are examined only by a few, the generality being content to admire, because it is the fashion to admire. If the work under these circumstances be pompous and unmeaning, its success is sure, as its pomp dazzles and its vacancy puzzles, both which are admirable ingredients to procure respect. This I think is

the true way to account for the applause and admiration that have been given to those miserable rhapsodies published by Macpherson under the name of Ossian. They were ushered into the world with great pomp, as the production of an ancient bard, and recommended by the respectable authority of Dr. Blair, aided by all the national prejudice of the Scotch. Few, therefore, were willing to allow that they disliked them, and still fewer bold enough to declare their dislike openly. Hence they have been received by many as standards of true taste and sublimity, which the author modestly declared them to be. The consequence of this was the corrupting all true taste, and introducing gigantic and extravagant tinsel for easy dignity and natural sublimity. I attribute this false taste to these poems, because I see so many artists who have been working from them, all of whose works are tainted with it; and indeed it can hardly be otherwise, as the poems themselves (for so they are improperly called,) are nothing but a confused compilation of tinsel and fustian, such as any one might write who had impudence enough to publish. Fashionable authors have great influence upon the taste of a nation: Seneca and Lucan certainly corrupted that of the Romans; and Homer as certainly formed that of the Greeks. Before his time, Sidon was the country of the arts, as himself frequently mentions; but as soon as that spirit of true taste, elegance, and sublimity, which

he had breathed into them, began to operate, they infinitely surpassed all other nations.”—(*The above by Burke.*)

Great as was the genius of Burke, it was impossible for him to have written the foregoing criticism on the art without the powerful assistance of Reynolds.

In the month of June, this year, Johnson sat for his picture to Miss Reynolds, and speaking of this performance in a letter to Mrs. Thrale, he says, “yesterday I sat for my picture to Miss Reynolds, perhaps for the tenth time, and I sat near three hours with the patience of *mortal born to bear*; at last she declared it quite finished, and seems to think it fine.”

This instance may serve to show that perseverance was the rule and practice of Sir Joshua’s school; for I have known himself, on some occasions, require as many sittings and as long at each time.

Much as Johnson admired Miss Reynolds’s talents, however, he did not compliment her upon that production; but, when finished, told her it was “Johnson’s grimly ghost;” and as the picture was afterwards to be engraved, he recommended as an appropriate motto, that stanza from the old ballad of William and Margaret, “In glided,” &c.*

* The abovementioned portrait of Dr. Johnson, three quarters length, was painted in oil of the size of the life, and is now in

Miss Reynolds at first amused herself by painting miniature portraits, and in that part of the art was particularly successful. Sir Joshua having painted a child of the Duke of Marlborough's, Miss Reynolds copied it in miniature, and presented it to the duke, who in return sent her a gold snuff box.

In her attempts at oil painting, however, she did not succeed, which made Reynolds say jestingly, that her pictures in that way made other people laugh and him cry; and as he did not approve of her painting in oil, she generally did it by stealth. Once she was making a copy from a very fine picture, which he had made of a Nymph and Bacchus, painted from a girl named Miss Hill. Whilst Miss Reynolds was working upon this copy, she heard her brother suddenly coming into the library in which she was working, when she, in great haste endeavouring to hide the picture, by accident threw it down, and by the fall caused a considerable part of the face and neck of the portrait to drop from the canvass, to the great surprize and annoyance of them both.

We see that Dr. Johnson was accustomed to speak the plain truth, by what he said to Miss Reynolds on his portrait, and that he never condescended to give an equivocal answer to any question; of which the following is an instance.

the possession of John Hatsell, esq., in Cotton Garden, Westminster.

A lady of his acquaintance once asked him how it happened that he was never invited to dine at the tables of the great ?

He replied, " Because, Madam, great lords and ladies do not like to have their mouths stopped !"

Perhaps his abstinence from wine might have induced him to decline many invitations, from a wish not to appear singular ; for Sir Joshua informed a friend that he had never seen Dr. Johnson intoxicated by hard drinking but once, and that happened at the time they were together in Devonshire, when one night after supper Johnson drank three bottles of wine, which affected his speech so much that he was unable to articulate a hard word which occurred in the course of his conversation. He attempted it three times but failed, yet, at last accomplished it, and then said, " Well Sir Joshua I think it is now time to go to bed."

I apprehend he afterwards made a vow to abstain from wine entirely, as I recollect that once when I dined in his company at Sir Joshua's table, Miss Reynolds offered to help him to some bread pudding, but he asked if there was any wine in the sauce, and being answered that there was, he refused it.

In the autumn of this year, a great and important political change was taking place in the Netherlands by the Emperor's order, particularly by the suppression of the greatest part of the religious and

monastic institutions, which was expected to cause the sale of a great number of Rubens's best paintings. Many persons went over to examine them, and amongst the rest Sir Joshua; and he took both Brussels and Antwerp in his route: but I do not possess any specific knowledge of this trip, except that he made some further excellent observations, which are among the best of his criticisms, and highly illustrative of the merits of Rubens, that prince of Flemish painters.

Mr. Malone has preserved some of his observations at this period, and he says, that Sir Joshua on his return from his first tour in 1781, thought that his own works seemed to want force, but that on viewing the paintings of Rubens a second time, even they appeared much less brilliant than on a former inspection. This circumstance he was at first unable to account for, until he recollected, that when he first saw them he had his note book in his hand, for the purpose of writing down some remarks, which he considered as the reason of their now making a less vivid impression in this respect than they had before done; for by the eye passing immediately from the white paper to the picture, the colours derived uncommon richness and warmth; though for want of this foil they afterwards appeared comparatively cold.

But, as he has also remarked, on his return the first time, that his own pictures wanted force, and it was observed that he painted with more depth

and brilliancy of colour afterwards, is it not more probable that the difference of the impression he felt from the sight of Rubens's pictures was owing to his having accustomed his eye in the mean time to a greater force and richness in his own works? or, at any rate, this must have assisted to increase the impression he felt.

Notwithstanding this nice discrimination and discernment of Sir Joshua, as an instance of the fallibility of memory respecting his own works, I cannot omit relating a circumstance rather curious, of his having totally forgotten one of his own performances—a full length portrait of a lady and her young son, painted by him in the early part of his life, but after his return from Italy. This was brought to me many years after the lady's death, to make a copy from it; and in the mean time, Sir Joshua accidentally calling at my house, saw the picture, and very gravely asked me who it was painted by. I answered, "They tell me it was by yourself." He then said, rather quickly, "Why, what have you been doing to it?" I replied that I had done nothing to it. Then, looking again at the picture, he said, "Why, I do not think it is very bad." I answered, "I think it is very fine, especially the head of the child:" and this was really the truth.

Sir Joshua, at another time, observed to me, of an admired genius in the art, that he grew worse instead of better, and seemed to have lost himself

in his careless execution and deficiency in finishing his works ; but added, “ It is not an uncommon case with those even who strive to improve in their profession ; he is, perhaps, trying experiments ; and if so, will in time come round again, probably better than ever.”

It was an established opinion of Sir Joshua’s, that if his painting a person’s portrait was limited to a short space of time, by accidental circumstances, it seldom did any injury to the work ; since it tended to produce a degree of exertion in him, that operated with as good an effect on the picture as he could have given to it had his time been unlimited.

Speaking to Sir Joshua of the abilities of a late eminent artist, I remarked that, if to his actual merits he had conjoined only one other quality, he would have been a very great painter. He replied, “ that it was ever the case ; for the want of one small requisite quality in addition destroyed the claim to perfection of even the greatest men.”

Sir Joshua this year executed several admired portraits ; but in the midst of his professional engagements he still found leisure to attend to literary pursuits, and to subjoin some very elaborate notes, consisting principally of practical observations and explanations of the rules laid down, to that translation of Du Fresnoy’s *Art of Painting* by Mr. Mason, which was published at this period. These

notes are in the third volume of his works, as published by Mr. Malone.

It appears, indeed, if the world owe any thing to Mr. Mason for this production, that they are also partly indebted for it to Sir Joshua, as it had long lain in manuscript unfinished, in Mr. Mason's library, and was only at length brought forward in consequence of his having requested a sight of it, and then freely making an offer of illustrating it in the manner he has done, which renders the work invaluable.

One professional anecdote which Sir Joshua mentions in these notes, of his own practice, deserves notice here.

Speaking of Paul Veronese, Tintoret, and the other painters of the Venetian School, he says, "When I was at Venice, the method I took to avail myself of their principles was this. When I observed an extraordinary effect of light and shade in any picture, I took a leaf out of my pocket book, and darkened every part of it in the same gradation of light and shade as the picture, leaving the white paper untouched, to represent the light, and this without any attention to the subject, or to the drawing of the figures. A few trials of this kind will be sufficient to give the method of their conduct in the management of their lights. After a few experiments, I found the paper blotted nearly alike: their general practice appeared to be, to allow not above a quarter of the picture

for the light, including in this portion both the principal and secondary lights; another quarter to be kept as dark as possible; and the remaining half kept in mezzotint, or half shadow. Rubens appears to have admitted rather more light than a quarter, and Rembrandt much less, scarce an eighth; by this conduct Rembrandt's light is extremely brilliant, but it costs too much—the rest of the picture is sacrificed to this one object. That light will certainly appear the brightest which is surrounded with the greatest quantity of shade, supposing equal skill in the artist.

“By this means you may likewise remark the various forms and shapes of those lights, as well as the objects on which they are flung; whether a figure, or the sky, a white napkin, animals, or utensils, often introduced for this purpose only. It may be observed, likewise, what portion is strongly relieved, and how much is united with its ground; for it is necessary that some part (though a small one is sufficient) should be sharp and cutting against its ground, whether it be light on a dark, or dark on a light ground, in order to give firmness or distinctness to the work: if, on the other hand, it is relieved on every side, it will appear as if inlaid on its ground.

“Such a blotted paper, held at a distance from the eye, will strike the spectator as something excellent for the disposition of light and shadow, though he does not distinguish whether it is a

history, a portrait, a landscape, dead game, or any thing else; for the same principles extend to every branch of the art.”

Having recorded some of Reynolds' notes illustrative of Mason's Translation of Du Fresnoy, it may also be noticed, that Sir Joshua, in another of the notes, has given, with great caution, the following opinion :

“ The pre-eminence which Fresnoy has given to those three great painters, Raffaele, Michael Angelo, and Julio Romano, sufficiently points out to us what ought to be the chief object of our pursuit. Though two of them were either totally ignorant of, or never practised, any of those graces of the art which proceed from the management of colours, or the disposition of light and shadow ; and the other (Raffaele) was far from being eminently skilful in these particulars : yet they justly deserve that high rank in which Fresnoy has placed them ; (Michael Angelo, for the grandeur and sublimity of his characters, as well as for his profound knowledge of design ; Raffaele, for the judicious arrangement of materials, for grace, dignity, and the expression of his characters ; and Julio Romano for possessing the true poetical genius of painting, perhaps in a higher degree than any other painter whatever.)

“ In heroic subjects it will not, I hope, appear too great a refinement of criticism to say, that the want of naturalness or deception of art, which

gives to an inferior style its whole value, is no material disadvantage: the Hours, for instance, as represented by Julio Romano, giving provender to the horses of the Sun, would not strike the imagination more forcibly from their being coloured with the pencil of Rubens, though he would have represented them more naturally: but might he not possibly, by that very act, have brought them down from the celestial state to the rank of mere terrestrial animals?"

Sir Joshua afterwards modestly adds, that, "in these things, however, I admit there will always be a degree of uncertainty. Who knows that Julio Romano, if he had possessed the art and practice of colouring like Rubens, would not have given to it some taste of poetical grandeur not yet attained to?"

"The same familiar naturalness would be equally an imperfection in characters which are to be represented as demi-gods, or something above humanity."

Sir Joshua further adds: "Though it would be far from an addition to the merit of those two great painters to have made their works deceptions, yet there can be no reason why they might not in some degree, and with a judicious caution and selection, have availed themselves of many excellencies which are found in the Venetian, Flemish, and Dutch schools, and which have been inculcated in this poem. There are some of them

which are not in absolute contradiction to any style; the preservation of breadth in the masses of colours; the union of these with their grounds; and the harmony arising from a due mixture of hot and cold hues, with many other excellencies not inseparably connected with that individuality which produces deception, would surely not counteract the effect of the grand style; they would only contribute to the ease of the spectator, by making the vehicle pleasing by which ideas are conveyed to the mind, which otherwise might be perplexed and bewildered with a confused assemblage of objects; they would add a certain degree of grace and sweetness to strength and grandeur. Though the merits of these two great painters are of such transcendency as to make us overlook their deficiency, yet a subdued attention to these inferior excellencies must be added to complete the idea of perfection."

Mr. Opie in answer to this, I think very justly, observes, "Can it be supposed that the Hours leading out the Horses of the Sun, painted by Julio Romano, would have been less poetical and celestial had they possessed more harmony, brilliancy, and truth of colouring? Yet this has been supposed, and by a writer whose name I revere, and whose works will be an honour to this country as long as taste and genius continue to attract admiration. But though I respect *him* much, I respect *truth* more, which I think will bear me

out in maintaining the contrary opinion. Celestial objects, according to our conceptions of them, differ from terrestrial ones, not in essence, but in beauty; not in principle, but in power; and our representations of them should possess all the splendour and effect, as well as all the vigour, spirit, and elevation of character possible. To a certain portion of spirit and character it was doubtless owing, that in *spite* of, and not by the aid of defects, Julio Romano's horses became the objects of admiration; and had this excellence been joined to the others with which they are always associated in our minds, the effect of the work must have been proportionally greater, and it would have consequently stood still higher in the scale of art.

“Such paradoxical opinions cannot be too closely examined, as they tend to arrest the progress of art, and prevent those attempts by which alone perfection must (if ever) be obtained. For what is perfection, but the complete union of all parts of the art; and if they are incompatible, what have we to hope for?”

At another time, Sir Joshua, in conversation, gave it as his opinion, that the cartoons of Raffaele are of a colour most proper for such subjects as they mean to represent; and that, was their colour a more exact imitation of nature, it would only vulgarise and render them more familiar to us, and lessen the impressive sublimity of their

effect. This, at first, seems to be very sound reasoning. But yet, I apprehend it not to be a just judgement, inasmuch as it pre-supposes, that in the absence of this natural and familiar colour its place is supplied by an unobtrusive visionary negative hue; and if such were indeed possible, the reasoning might be good: but, on the contrary, we find a colour positive and unnatural, and which obtrudes upon our minds the recollection of things still terrestrial and familiar, much more vulgar and degrading, and more destructive of the awful impression that is intended to be made, whilst the dusky hues of brick-dust and charcoal are forced upon our ideas from their similarity to the tints of the picture. Besides, we shall soon perceive, that if we raise the scene in our mind's eye, we shall have a sublime picture presented to us in a colour, still as far from that positive one of Julio Romano or Raffaele as it might be from common familiar nature, and without any similitude to coarse terrestrial substances, so as to break the illusion, or draw off our attention from the awful idea.

Sir Joshua seems not to have reasoned so wrong on the principle as he is unlucky in the instances he has given; as it is certain that a positive bad colour, proceeding from an inability in the painter in that part of the art, ought never to be received as a model of imitation under whatever high authority it may be found.

Pope, with Dryden's translation of Du Fresnoy corrected by Jervas, sent to that indifferent painter the well-known and most exquisitely poetical letter in which are these lines :

“ Smit with the love of sister Arts we came,
 And met congenial, mingling flame with flame ;
 Like friendly colours found them both unite,
 And each from each contract new strength and light.
 How oft in pleasing tasks we wear the day,
 While summer suns roll unperceiv'd away ?
 How oft our slowly growing works impart,
 While images reflect from Art to Art ?
 How oft review, each finding like a friend,
 Something to blame, and something to commend ?”

So Mr. Mason, when he sent his translation of Du Fresnoy to his friend Sir Joshua Reynolds, thought it incumbent on himself also “ to mingle flame with flame ;” and thus Mr. Mason addresses the great painter :

“ Let friendship, as she caus'd, excuse the deed ;
 With thee, and such as thee, she must succeed :
 But what, if fashion tempted POPE astray,
 The witch has spells, and JERVAS knew a day
 When mode-struck belles and beaux were proud to come,
 And buy of him a thousand years of bloom,
 Even then I deem it but a venal crime ;
 Perish alone that selfish sordid rhyme,
 Which flatters lawless sway, or tinsel pride ;
 Let black oblivion plunge it in her tide.”

This species of imitation is well described in one of Æsop's fables.

To return to the period of our narrative; it was said in a contemporary character of Reynolds, at this period, that he had so little of the jealousy of his profession, that when a celebrated English artist, on his arrival from Italy, asked him where he should set up a house, Sir Joshua told him that the next house to his own was vacant, and that he had found his own situation a very good one.*

It is also recorded as an instance of his prizing extraordinary merit, that when Gainsborough asked him but sixty guineas for his celebrated girl and pigs, yet being conscious in his own mind that it was worth more, he liberally paid him down one hundred guineas for the picture.

I also find it mentioned on record, that a painter of considerable merit having unfortunately made an injudicious matrimonial choice, was, along with that and its consequences, as well as an increasing family, in a few years reduced so very low, that he could not venture out without danger of being arrested, a circumstance which, in a great measure, put it out of his power to dispose of his pictures to advantage.

* A young painter who made a visit to his native town, after having studied in London, was well received there, and had his hands over full of work in portraits, but which he left abruptly from his great desire to make the tour of Italy. When he saw Sir Joshua in London, and related the circumstance to him, Reynolds blamed him for leaving such a harvest, saying "You should have staid as long as the rage lasted, and not have left it, as it cannot be recovered when once lost."

Sir Joshua having accidentally heard of his situation, immediately hurried to his residence, to inquire into the truth of it, when the unfortunate man told him all the melancholy particulars of his lot, adding that forty pounds would enable him to compound with his creditors.

After some further conversation, Sir Joshua took his leave, telling the distressed man he would do something for him, and when he was bidding him adieu at the door, he took him by the hand, and after squeezing it in a friendly way, “hurried off with that kind of triumph in his heart, the exalted of human kind only experience.” whilst the astonished artist found that he had left in his hand a bank note for one hundred pounds.

Amongst other instances of Sir Joshua’s liberality towards artists, may be recorded his reception and encouragement of the late Ozias Humphrey, the miniature painter, and a native of Devonshire. The circumstance happened, indeed, some years previous to the present date; but having been only recently favoured by a friend, with the perusal of a manuscript in Mr. Humphrey’s own hand writing, I take pleasure in the introduction of it in this place, nearly in the writer’s own words.

Though Mr. Humphrey had been for some time in the metropolis, so that Sir Joshua’s person had been familiar to him at auctions and at every public place, his eminence making him an object of

attention to all students, yet he had never enjoyed any intercourse with him personally.

His character, however, for liberality and general favour, was so well established, that there seemed, to the youthful artist, to be no danger of a rebuff in venturing to call upon him, with a view to exhibit, and request the favour of his opinion of one or two miniatures which Mr. Humphrey had brought with him to town, from Bath, where he had practised for some time previous.

Sir Joshua received him, as he did every person, with singular courtesy and encouragement; commended the performances and was pleased to say that they were promising; then, enquired of him where he had painted them? and how he was situated?

Understanding that Mr. Humphrey had just come from Bath, he particularly enquired what had induced him to visit the metropolis? when Humphrey replied that he had come for the sole purpose of improvement. "What," Sir Joshua asked, "is your scheme of study, and what do you propose to do? to which the answer was that he was unacquainted with London, that the advantages which it contained were not specifically known to him, and therefore it had not yet been possible for him to fix upon any plan. "Do you mean to copy pictures?" said Sir Joshua; and the reply was, "Certainly, if I could procure any." Sir Joshua immediately said that

he had many of Vandyke and other great masters, and had also many of his own painting; adding that Mr. Humphrey was welcome to the use of any of them. The latter thanked Sir Joshua respectfully; and said that he should accept, with thankfulness, the favours he was disposed to shew him, by either copying any old picture which he might recommend to him, or one of Sir Joshua's in preference, if he had any that he could conveniently spare him.

Sir Joshua then observed, that he might copy any one of his own performances, if it was most agreeable; which, perhaps, might be as well, on account of the modern manner of treating and representing the subject of the day. This proffered favour, Sir Joshua kindly completed by desiring Mr. Humphrey to fix upon any picture he liked; but the latter declined choosing for himself, not only because he preferred Sir Joshua's judgement to his own, but from his apprehension that (unacquainted as he was with the characters of the time) he might perhaps fix upon one that could not, with propriety, be granted him. He therefore requested Sir Joshua to choose one for him, which was instantly complied with. In a short time the copy was finished, and carried to Sir Joshua, who, in the most liberal manner, declared his approbation, and said many encouraging things to the youthful artist, and recommended another picture to Mr. Humphrey; an historical head of

King Lear in the storm, which was finished and brought for inspection in three or four days, at which also Sir Joshua expressed surprize and admiration, declaring that it was superior to any thing he had seen in miniature, of modern painting, adding "this picture is so finely painted, that you must allow me to purchase it of you. What is your price?" Mr. Humphrey replied, that he had no price, that the approbation Sir Joshua had the goodness to express respecting it, could not be appreciated ; and was so unexpected and so gratifying that he wanted words to manifest his sense of it, and therefore he requested that Sir Joshua would increase the obligation by accepting the miniature. "That," said Sir Joshua, "I cannot do; but I must have the picture, in order to shew it, that I may be useful to you. What is your price?"

The youthful artist, after much hesitation, naming three guineas, "Oh!" exclaimed his patron, "that price is too little! I must and will give five guineas for it, which you must tell to every body, and let that be your price from this day forward." This discourse and encouragement animated the young painter almost to madness. Sir Joshua then enquired more particularly all the circumstances of his life, where he was born, and how he had passed his earliest years? And, when informed of his being a native of Devonshire, replied "I am glad to hear it; for I am from Devonshire myself." Mr. Humphrey, having said that his

mother was engaged in a considerable manufacture of Bath Brussels Lace, at Honiton, Sir Joshua obligingly remarked, "Vandyke's mother was engaged in a similar concern. I hope your success in life will be as honourable and as distinguished as Vandyke's was." To this he added, "It would be a sin, and highly imprudent for you to continue any longer at Bath, under so many comparative disadvantages. I advise you immediately to settle in town; and if you should live near me, I will do every thing I can to assist you."

Sir Joshua's advice was taken; and Mr. Humphrey enjoyed the advantage of it, finding every promise more than fulfilled.

Of such traits of benevolence certainly many other instances might be recorded, but I shall only mention two more.

When Zoffanii the painter came to England he was but little known in this country, and without a patron; but the very first picture which he exhibited in London was purchased by Sir Joshua at the price which Zoffanii demanded for it.

The picture represents a scene in the farce of the Alchymist, in which there is a most excellent portrait of Garrick in the character of Able Druggger, accompanied by those of Palmer and Burton. This picture Sir Joshua sold soon after to the Earl of Carlisle for twenty guineas above the price which he had given for it, and sent the advanced price immediately to Zoffanii, saying, "he thought he had sold the picture at first below its real value."

The clergyman, who succeeded Sir Joshua's father as master of the Grammar School at Plympton, at his decease left a widow, who after the death of her husband opened a boarding school for the education of young ladies. The teacher who assisted in this school had but few friends in situations to do her much service, and her sole dependence was on her small stipend from the school: hence she was unable to make a sufficiently reputable appearance in apparel at their accustomed little balls. The daughter of the school-mistress, her only child, and at that time a very young girl, felt for the poor teacher's pitiable insufficiency in the article of finery, but being unable to help her from her own resources devised within herself a mode by which it might be done otherwise.

Having heard of the great fame of Sir Joshua Reynolds, and his character for generosity and charity, recollecting also that he had formerly belonged to the Plympton school, she without mentioning a syllable to any of her companions addressed a letter to Sir Joshua, whom she had never even seen, in which she represented to him the forlorn state of the poor young woman's wardrobe, and begged the gift of a silk gown for her. Very shortly after they received a box containing silks of different patterns, sufficient for two dresses, to the infinite astonishment of the simple teacher, who was totally unable to account for this piece of good for-

tune, as the compassionate girl was afraid to let her know the means she had taken in order to procure the welcome present.

I mentioned the circumstance afterwards to Sir Joshua who assured me of its truth.

Sir Joshua was exceedingly willing at all times to lend pictures, prints, or drawings, or any thing in his possession, particularly to young artists; and he has sometimes been near losing them, by their being seized for rent, or from other circumstances to which the indigence of the borrowers rendered them liable. I do not think he ever denied any one who asked; he also readily gave his advice to all those who came to seek it, and they were frequently very numerous, insomuch as to take up his time, and make him occasionally rather tart in his answers, but not often. One instance I recollect of a young artist, who frequently took his pictures to him to have the faults pointed out, as well as those parts of them in which he was successful, in order to his improvement. This artist was desired by another young painter to introduce him to Sir Joshua, that he might have the like advantage, and accordingly they went together with their productions in their hands. The first showed his work, and received some commendations on it from Sir Joshua; when the second artist, who was considerably inferior in his practice to the first, with much awe and trembling humbly displayed his performance, which was the portrait of a female: but Sir Joshua, who

was very tenacious of his time, and had been too often annoyed by similar applications, hastily exclaimed to him, "What is this you have in your hand? You should not shew such things. What's that upon her head, a dish-clout?" The poor forlorn artist was so confounded at this first introduction, that he went home, and was literally not able to resume his palette and pencils for more than a month afterwards.

This circumstance was related to me by the artist who was the introducer; but I believe Sir Joshua was totally unconscious of the effect it had on the young man, or he never would have spoken in that manner.

One day when Sir Joshua called at my house, and saw the picture I was then painting, he objected to its colouring, saying I had made it too florid; I answered that Mr. — the painter had just before been with me, and had observed of that very picture that it was not sufficiently vivid in its colour: when Sir Joshua answered rather sharply, "Look at that painter's works, and thence you may estimate the value of his advice."

1784.

ÆTAT. 60.

IN the year 1784, Sir Joshua had a decided pre-eminence at the Exhibition. His principal pic-

ture was the portrait of Mrs. Siddons, as the Tragic Muse, now the property of William Smith, Esq. M. P., from which a well known print has been taken; this picture Sir Joshua valued at 1000 guineas. Barry observes of this portrait as follows. "Sir Joshua's portrait of Mrs. Siddons is, both for the ideal and executive, the finest picture of the kind, perhaps in the world. Indeed it is something more than a portrait, and may serve to give an excellent idea of what an enthusiastic mind is apt to conceive of those pictures of confined history, for which Appelles was so celebrated by the ancient writers; but this picture of Mrs. Siddons or the Tragic muse was painted not long since; when much of his attention had been turned to history."

The Fortune-teller, sold to the Duke of Dorset,* and a portrait of Miss Kemble, were in the same Exhibition.

* The Duke of Dorset loved and distinguished excellence amongst the professors of his own country, even whilst he was engaged in studying and collecting the chefs d'œuvre of foreign art. Indeed, he frequently denied himself common necessaries, for a person of his high birth and station, that he might indulge himself in the possession of the best modern pictures. Out of his small income, he paid four hundred guineas for the Ugolino, and when it was remarked that it was a large sum to pay for a modern production, "That may be true," replied the Duke, "but the picture affords me so much more pleasure than the money would, that I do not know how it could be better applied."

He likewise purchased the Gipsy Fortune-teller for three hundred guineas.

The last of these drew forth great applause from the numerous literary friends of that lady; and the following poetic tribute to the skill of Sir Joshua, may not be undeserving of insertion.

“ While hands obscene, at vicious grandeur’s call,
With mimic harlots cloathe th’ indignant wall,
Destructive snares for youthful passion spread,
The slacken’d bosom, and the faithless bed,
Thy pencil, *Reynolds!* innocently gay,
To virtue leads by pleasure’s flowery way;
In blushing honour decks the tim’rous bride,
Or maid whose thoughts confederate Angels guide:
For thy rare skill, to surface unconfi’d,
Through every genuine feature pours the mind.
Should the wild rage of other *Phrynes* compare
With Corinth’s past the British drama’s fair,
(Though art may Palmer’s vanish’d form deplore,
And Satchell’s eyes unpictur’d beam no more)
If firm duration crowns thy just design,
Nor all its soft similitudes decline,
In Kemble’s look chastis’d will yet be seen
What one bright daughter of the stage has been
Reserv’d though mingling with the loud, the vain,
And uneduc’d where Syren pleasures reign.
Where dames undone and social ruin smile,
While echo’d scandal shakes a guilty pile.
Pleas’d we behold, by thy congenial hand,
In native charms embodied virtue stand;
For vice can ne’er its odious traces hide,
The glance of lewdness, or the swell of pride.
Mark’d to be shunn’d, and stigmatiz’d by fate,
Since in each varied guise, of scorn or hate,
O’er all the face its dire effusions shoot,
As branches still are modell’d by the root.
But, for our love when grace and merit vie,
Attract the decent, check the lawless eye,

Th' instructive canvass moral worth excites,
And *Reynolds* paints the lessons *Johnson* writes.
Should time, whose force our hopes in vain withstand,
Blast the nymph's face, and shake the painter's hand,
Yet may these tints divide the fame they give,
And art and beauty bid each other live!"

Another painting of Sir Joshua's was exhibited this year by the Society for promoting Painting and Design at Liverpool; which was a landscape containing a view on the Thames from his own villa on Richmond-hill. This has been engraved by Birch in his "Délices de la Grande Bretagne," and was one of the very few landscapes ever done by the subject of our biography.

In regular landscape painting his works are very scarce; there is, as I have been informed, one in the possession of Sir Brook Boothby, Bart., another in the collection of Lord Pelham, at Stanmer, and two he bequeathed to Sir George Baker, Bart. M. D. who attended the family; these are, of course, with the exceptions of those chaste and exquisite ones which so often form a back ground to his portraits.

Soon after this, Sir Joshua interested himself most strenuously for his friend Dr. Johnson, in order to procure an additional grant from the crown as an increase to his pension, thence to enable him to try the air of the south of France and Italy, for his declining health. Sir John Hawkins in his life of Johnson gives all the credit

of this negotiation, at least of its commencement, to Sir Joshua, whilst Mr. Boswell claims the merit of having written the first letter on the subject to Lord Thurlow, then Lord Chancellor.

The various details of the event have been so often related by Johnson's biographers, that I need not enter further on it than to say, that it met with Sir Joshua's cordial concurrence and assistance from the first, and was attended to by him with much assiduity during its progress, from his earnest wish for the welfare of his venerable friend.

This called forth Johnson's grateful acknowledgments; and he, from Ashbourne in Derbyshire, on the 9th of September, thus writes to Sir Joshua Reynolds:—

“Many words, I hope, are not necessary, between you and me, to convince you what gratitude is excited in my heart by the chancellor's liberality, and your kind offices. I have enclosed a letter to the chancellor, which you will be pleased to seal with a head or any other general seal, and convey it to him; had I sent it directly to him, I should have seemed to overlook the favour of your intervention.”

On the death of Ramsay, the King's painter, in August of this year, Sir Joshua was sworn principal painter to his Majesty, to which a small salary is also annexed; but the emolument, of course, was not the object of Sir Joshua's ambition.

With respect to Sir Joshua's appointment to be principal painter to his Majesty, it may be added, that at this time, in the month of August, Sir Joshua received a letter from Dr. Johnson, who was then at Ashbourne, which not only shows his great attachment to Sir Joshua, but may be considered as having a reference to the above circumstance.

“ Having had, since our separation, little to say that could please you or myself by saying, I have not been lavish of useless letters.

“ Poor Ramsay ! on which side soever I turn, mortality presents its formidable frown. I left three old friends at Lichfield when I was last there, and have found them all dead. I no sooner lost sight of dear Allan, than I am told I shall see him no more. That we must all die we always knew ; I wish I had sooner remembered it. Do not think me intrusive or importunate if I now call, dear Sir, on you to remember it.”

In another letter, dated September, to Sir Joshua from Johnson, he says, “ I am glad that a little favour from the court has interrupted your furious purposes. I could not, in any case, have approved such public violence of resentment, and should have considered any who encouraged it, as rather seeking sport for themselves, than honour for you. Resentment gratifies him who intended the injury, and pains him unjustly who did not intend it. But all is now superfluous.”

To what event this last letter alludes is to me unknown; but most probably it refers to Sir Joshua's becoming painter to the King. I know that Sir Joshua expected the appointment would be offered to him on the death of Ramsay, and expressed his disapprobation with regard to soliciting for it; but he was informed that it was a necessary point of etiquette, with which at last he complied, and seems to have pleased Johnson by so doing, who again wrote, dated September 18th of this year—

“ I flattered myself, that this week would have given me a letter from you, but none has come. Write to me now and then, but direct to me next at Lichfield.

“ I have three letters this day, all about the balloon; I could have been content with one. Do not write me about the balloon, whatever else you may think proper to say.” A few days after he wrote—

“ October 2. I am always proud of your approbation, and therefore was much pleased that you liked my letter. When you copied it, you invaded the chancellor's right rather than mine. The refusal I did not expect, but I had never thought much about it, for I doubted whether the chancellor had so much tenderness for me as to ask. He, being the keeper of the King's conscience, ought not to be supposed capable of an

improper petition.—All is not gold that glitters, as we have often been told ; and the adage is verified in your place* and my favour : but if what happens does not make us richer, we must bid it welcome if it makes us wiser. I do not at present grow better, nor much worse ; my hopes, however, are somewhat abated, and a very great loss is the loss of hope, but I struggle on as I can.”

I trust I shall be pardoned for giving these extracts from Johnson’s letters to Sir Joshua; as they throw light on the characters of both, and contain also the opinions of so considerable a judge of mankind as Dr. Johnson.

Boswell relates, that being in conversation with Sir Joshua Reynolds and Dr. Johnson, Sir Joshua said, that he took the altitude of a man’s taste by his stories and his wit, and his understanding by the remarks which he repeated, being always sure that he must be a weak man who quotes common things with an emphasis as if they were oracles :—Johnson agreed with him ; and Sir Joshua having observed that the real character of a man was found out by his amusements, Johnson added, “ Yes, Sir, no man is a hypocrite in his pleasures.” I might also add, that much of a man’s capacity

* Alluding probably to the place of King’s painter ; which, since Burke’s reforming the King’s household expenses, had been reduced from £200 to £50 per annum.

and disposition may be discovered by his manner of laughing, and the matter he laughs at, without his speaking.

At another time, Sir Joshua, Dr. Johnson, and Mr. Boswell were dining together, and in the course of conversation, Boswell lamented that he had not been so happy as to have lived at that period which has been called the Augustan age of England, when Swift, Addison, Pope, &c., &c., flourished. Sir Joshua said, that he thought Mr. Boswell had no reason to complain, as it was better to be alive than dead, as those were whom he named. But Johnson laughing, said, "No, Sir, Boswell is in the right, as perhaps he has lost the opportunity which he might then have had, of having his name immortalized by being put into the *Dunciad*!"

It was the opinion of Dr. Johnson, that the concluding lines of the *Dunciad* were among the finest lines of Pope, and not inferior to those of any poet that ever existed.

It was a particular pleasure to Sir Joshua when he got into his hands any damaged pictures by some eminent old masters; and he has very frequently worked upon them with great advantage, and has often made them, both in effect and colour, vastly superior to what they had ever been in their original state. For instance, with respect to one picture by Velasquez, a full length portrait of Philip the Fourth of Spain when a boy. I well

remember, when I entered his painting-room one day, and saw this picture, he said to me, "See, there is a fine picture by Velasquez." I looked at it and greatly admired it, and with much simplicity said, "Indeed it is very fine; and how exactly it is in your own manner, Sir Joshua?" yet it never entered into my mind that he had touched upon it, which was really the fact, and particularly on the face.

The picture, also, of a Moor blowing a pipe or flute, by Velasquez, now at Southill, the seat of William Whitbread, esq., I bought for Sir Joshua at a picture sale by his desire. When he got it into his painting-room, he painted an entire new back ground to the picture, a sky instead of what was before all dark without any effect; but with this and some few other small alterations, it became one of the finest pictures I ever saw.

In this year Charles Catton, a Royal Academician, was, by rotation, become master of the Painter Stainers' Company of the city of London, and he was particularly ambitious of introducing his friend, and a man so celebrated as Sir Joshua Reynolds, to share in their corporate honours; accordingly the brothers voluntarily voted him the freedom of their company, which was presented to him when he dined at their hall on St. Luke's day, the patron saint of painters. This favor, so properly and well bestowed, he received with due respect. This civic compliment was accompanied

by a copy of verses in honor of their new brother citizen ; in which the Muses were invoked to celebrate his praise and an event so important.—A compliment, on the whole, which pleased Sir Joshua not a little.

The lines may be found in the Gentleman's Magazine for that year, page 854 ; they are not indifferently written ; a portion of taste is even displayed in some of the passages : but it is very possible that their dinner was still better than their poetry, and their respect more gratifying than either.

Sir Joshua now met with an irreparable loss in the demise of his friend, Dr. Samuel Johnson, who died on the 13th of December, 1784.

The particulars of this event have been so often recorded, that it would be superfluous to detail them here ; I may observe, however, that Mr. Boswell has justly stated, that the Doctor made three requests of Sir Joshua a short time previous to his death: one was to forgive him thirty pounds which he had borrowed of him ; another was, that Sir Joshua should carefully read the Scriptures ; and the last, that he should abstain from using his pencil on the sabbath day ; to all of which Sir Joshua gave a willing assent.

Johnson had appointed him one of the executors of his will, together with Sir William Scott and Sir John Hawkins ; a trust which he faithfully fulfilled : he also left him his great French Dic-

tionary, by Moreri, and his own copy of his folio English Dictionary, of the last revision, as a friendly testimony of remembrance; also a book from his library to Mrs. Frances Reynolds, sister to Sir Joshua.

What the feelings of Sir Joshua must have been on this occasion may be easily conceived, and it has been well described by Mr. Boswell in his dedication of his "Life of Johnson," some time afterwards. This dedication is at the same time so honorable to, and descriptive of, Sir Joshua, in many respects, that I trust I shall be excused for the insertion of part of it in this place.

Mr. Boswell says, "Every liberal motive, that can actuate an author in the dedication of his labours, concurs in directing me to you, as the person to whom the following work should be inscribed. If there be a pleasure in celebrating the distinguished merit of a contemporary, mixed with a certain degree of vanity, not altogether inexcusable, in appearing fully sensible of it, where can I find one in complimenting whom I can with more general approbation gratify those feelings? Your excellence, not only in the art over which you have long presided with unrivalled fame, but also in philosophy and elegant literature, is well known to the present, and will continue to be the admiration of future ages. Your equal and placid temper, your variety of conversation, your true politeness, by which you are so amiable

in private society, and that enlarged hospitality which has long made your house a common centre of union for the great, the accomplished, the learned, and the ingenious; all these qualities I can, in perfect confidence of not being accused of flattery, ascribe to you. If a man may indulge in an honest pride, in having it known to the world, that he has been thought worthy of particular attention by a person of the first eminence in the age in which he lives, whose company has been universally courted, I am justified in availing myself of the usual privilege of a dedication, when I mention that there has been a long and uninterrupted friendship between us. If gratitude should be acknowledged for favors received, I have this opportunity, my dear Sir, most sincerely to thank you for the many happy hours which I owe to your kindness—for the cordiality with which you have, at all times, been pleased to welcome—for the number of valuable acquaintances to whom you have introduced me—for the *noctes cœnæque Deum* which I have enjoyed under your roof. If a work should be inscribed to one who is master of the subject of it, and whose approbation, therefore, must insure it credit and success, the Life of Dr. Johnson is, with the greatest propriety, dedicated to Sir Joshua Reynolds, who was the intimate and beloved friend of that great man; the friend whom he declared to be the most invulnerable man he knew, with whom, if he should

quarrel, he should find the most difficulty how to abuse. You, my dear Sir, studied him, and knew him well. You venerated and admired him."

To this testimony of Boswell, it will certainly not be misplaced to add some few other observations of Johnson himself respecting his friend.

In one place, Boswell records that he much admired the manner in which Sir Joshua treated of his art, in his discourses to the Royal Academy. Of one remarkable passage, he said, "I think I might as well have said this myself;" and on another occasion, whilst Mr. Bennet Langton was sitting with him, he read one of them with great attention, and exclaimed, "Very well, Master Reynolds; very well indeed. But it will not be understood."

Johnson once observed, "I know no man who has passed through life with more observation than Reynolds;" and Boswell himself has very justly said, "that his philosophical penetration, and justness of thinking *were* not less known to those who lived with him, than his genius in his art is admired by the world."

I have, in more than one place, mentioned the high opinion of Dr. Johnson respecting his friend Sir Joshua, who in return had no less admiration of the powers and endowments of Johnson's mind: nor can it be considered otherwise than as adding dignity even to Johnson, when we find that Reynolds held him to be his master and preceptor, as

may be seen by a character he left of him, written with the intention of inserting it, by way of example, in some future discourse, but which he never lived to finish.

“No man,” he says, “like Johnson, had the faculty of teaching inferior minds the art of thinking: perhaps other men might have equal knowledge, but few were so communicative. His great pleasure was to talk to those who looked up to him. It was here he exhibited his wonderful powers. In mixed company, and frequently in company that *ought* to have looked up to him, many, thinking they had a character for learning to support, considered it as beneath them to enlist in the train of his auditors; and to such persons he certainly did not appear to advantage, being often impetuous and overbearing. The desire of shining in conversation was in him indeed a predominant passion; and if it must be attributed to vanity, let it at the same time be recollected, that it produced that loquaciousness from which his more intimate friends derived considerable advantage. The observations which he made on poetry, on life, and on every thing about us, I applied to our art; with what success, others must judge. Perhaps an artist in his studies should pursue the same conduct; and instead of patching up a particular work on the narrow plan of imitation, rather endeavour to acquire the art and power of thinking. On this subject I have often spoken;

but it cannot be too often repeated, that the general power of composition may be acquired; and when acquired, the artist may then lawfully take hints from his predecessors. In reality, indeed, it appears to me that a man must begin by the study of others. Thus Bacon became a great thinker by first entering into, and making himself master of the thoughts of other men."

It was a further remark of Sir Joshua's, that no man of modern times had so much occupied the attention of the nation after his death as Dr. Johnson. Few men, even the illustrious in their day, dwell long upon our minds after they cease to exist amongst us.

Johnson had so high an opinion of Sir Joshua's benevolence of disposition, that he said to him once with a smile, "Reynolds, you hate no person living. But I like a good hater."

It seems, by this speech, that Johnson conceived that a good hater, as he termed it, was one who could feel the strongest degree of attachment to those who were so fortunate as to gain their love, and also that it might proceed from a mind that made strong distinctions in character: but it is certainly a dangerous doctrine.

I remember, however, that I once heard Sir Joshua say, that he thought it a very bad state of mind to hate any man; but that he feared that he did hate Barry, and if so, he had much excuse, if excuse be possible. The hatred of such a man is

no trifling disgrace ; still, I am convinced that this sentiment never influenced his conduct towards him.

I may now remark that they lie side by side in the grave.

Three days before Johnson's decease, Sir Joshua delivered his twelfth discourse at the Academy, which was principally of professional import. He laid it down as a truism, that particular methods of study are of little consequence, and that little of the art can be taught.

The love of method he considered as often arising from a disposition to mental idleness, whilst, at the same time, he acknowledged, that "*Pittori improvisatori*," as he terms them, are apt to be careless and incorrect, and are very seldom either original or striking ; defects proceeding from their not paying the proper attention to the works of Nature and the great masters.

From some observations in the early part of this discourse, it seems as if its subject had been, in some measure, pressed upon Sir Joshua, or rather, perhaps, hinted to him ; for in taking a view of the "Method of Study," he expressly said, that all the necessary information had already been given in his former discourses, and that any other would merely consist of plausible but ostentatious amplification, and would therefore be totally useless. On this point he made an observation highly worthy of general notice in this *educating* age.

“ Treatises on Education and Method of Study have always appeared to me to have one general fault. They proceed upon a false supposition of life ; as if we possessed, not only a power over events and circumstances, but had a greater power over ourselves, than I believe any of us will be found to possess !”

Again he observed, “ In the practice of art, as well as in morals, it is necessary to keep a watchful and jealous eye over ourselves : idleness, assuming the specious disguise of industry, will lull to sleep all suspicion of our want of an active exertion of strength.”*

Much interest was excited among the Dilletanti in the course of this year, by a discovery Sir Joshua made of an original painting of Milton, which he purchased for one hundred guineas, from a picture dealer, who had obtained it from a common furniture broker, who could not remember the time nor manner in which he came by it. In this portrait, the dress is black, with a band ; the date 1653, and the painter’s initials (S. C.) are marked upon it. On the back of it was a written memorandum, stating that this portrait had belonged to Deborah Milton, who was her father’s amanuensis, and that, at her death, it was sold to Sir William

* Frequently, when young persons were introduced to Sir Joshua as wonderful lads of great genius, he used to ask if their fondness for Art was a real love for it or only the effect of idleness.

Davenant's family. It also stated, that the portrait was painted by Samuel Cooper, who was painter to Oliver Cromwell, at the time when Milton was Latin Secretary to the Protector, and that the poet and painter were nearly of the same age, Milton being born in 1608, and dying in 1674; and Cooper, being born in 1609, and dying in 1672; they being companions and friends till death parted them. It was also stated, that several encouragers and lovers of the Fine Arts at that time wanted this picture, particularly Lord Dorset, John Somers, esq., Sir Robert Howard, Dryden, Atterbury, Dr. Aldrich, and Sir John Denham.

Mr. Warton, who notices this portrait particularly in his edition of Milton, says that Lord Dorset was probably the lucky man, as this seems to be the very picture which Vertue wished Prior to seek for in Lord Dorset's collection; but in another place he adds, that it must be owned that this miniature strongly resembles Vandyke's picture of Selden in the Bodleian Library at Oxford, it being highly probable that Cooper should have executed a miniature of Selden as a companion to the heads of other heroes of the commonwealth. This inference, however, is equally applicable to the supposition of its being Milton's; and Sir Joshua Reynolds himself said of it, "The picture is admirably painted, and with such a character of nature, that I am perfectly sure it was a striking

likeness. I have now got a distant idea of the countenance of Milton, which cannot be got from any other than the one that I have seen. It is perfectly preserved, which shows that it has been shut up in some drawer; if it had been exposed to the light, the colours would, long before this, have vanished."

A doubt having been started some years afterwards respecting the originality and authenticity of this miniature, a letter was inserted in the Gentleman's Magazine for 1791, in answer to one in a preceding number containing some strictures and expressing various doubts on the subject.

To these strictures and doubts, the letter was a very conclusive and argumentative reply; and as it is well known to have been the production of Sir Joshua's pen, and is not inserted in his works, I shall here give it a place.

" MR. URBAN.

June, 15.

" A correspondent in your last Magazine, p. 399, has made some strictures respecting the originality of the portrait of Milton, in the possession of Sir Joshua Reynolds, on which I beg leave to make some observations. That your readers may have a distinct view of the question, I shall transcribe the writing which is on the back of the picture.

" " This picture belonged to Deborah Milton, who was her father's amanuensis; at her death it

was sold to Sir William Davenant's family : it was painted by Mr. Samuel Cooper, who was painter to Oliver Cromwell at the time Milton was Latin Secretary to the Protector. The painter and poet were near of the same age, (Milton was born in 1608, and died in 1674; Cooper was born in 1609, and died in 1672;) and were companions and friends till death parted them. Several encouragers and lovers of the fine arts at that time wanted this picture, particularly Lord Dorset, John Somers, esq., Sir Robert Howard, Dryden, Atterbury, Dr. Aldrich, and Sir John Denham.'

“ Your critic first observes, that Deborah Milton, dying in 1727, all those encouragers and lovers of the fine arts here mentioned, were dead long before that time. Secondly, he remarks, that the picture could not belong to the Dorset family in 1720, which belonged to Deborah Milton in 1727. He asks, likewise, what can be meant by the miniature having been sold to the family of Sir William Davenant, as the memorandum bears so late a date as 1727? These objections, I will suppose for the credit of the writer, would not have been made if he had seen the print, under which he would have found the following remark :

“ The manuscript on the back of the picture appears to have been written some time before the year 1693, when Mr. Somers was knighted, and afterwards created Baron Evesham, which brings it

within nineteen years after Milton's death. The writer was mistaken in supposing that Deborah Milton was dead at that time; she lived till 1727, but in indigence and obscurity, married to a weaver in Spitalfields.

“ There is no reason to think (notwithstanding Mr. Warton's supposition, that Lord Dorset was probably the lucky man who purchased the picture,) that it ever was in Lord Dorset's possession. Vertue, indeed, had desired Prior to search in his Lordship's collection for this miniature, probably from the suggestion of Richardson, whose son Jonathan informed Sir Joshua Reynolds, that he had heard his father say, that there was somewhere a miniature of Milton, by Cooper, which, he was told, was a remarkable fine picture, but that he himself had never seen it. Perhaps Lord Dorset was thought likely to have been the possessor of this picture, because he formed a large collection of portraits of the most eminent men of his time, which are still to be seen at Knowle. I cannot avoid adding, that the present Duke, with equal respect to genius and talents, and with still more skill in the art, continues this plan; and to this collection of his ancestors has added the portraits of Dr. Johnson, Dr. Goldsmith, Mr. Garrick, and many others.—The third objection is easily answered: there is *no* date at all to the memorandum; and, so far from its bearing so late a date as 1727, it is very apparent it was written before the

year 1693, and that the writer of it was probably Sir William Davenant's son, who was at this time thirty-seven years old; and the picture may be supposed to be at that time wanted by Lord Dorset, John Somers, esq. &c. The critic says, 'I never had an opportunity of seeing the original miniature in question, and, unfortunately, the print by Miss Watson has never fallen in my way; but I should wish to know whether the *drop serene* be visible in it, as in Faithorne's drawing, and the bust. The date on the miniature is 1652, by which time Milton had become utterly blind.'

"In regard to the *drop serene*, we can assure your correspondent that it is not visible in the miniature, and that he is mistaken in saying that it is visible in the crayon picture by Faithorne; and that it is visible in the *bust*, as he affirms, is truly ridiculous. Milton himself says, that, though he had lost his sight, it was not perceptible to others; and that his eyes preserved their original lustre.

"The date on the picture is 1653, and not 1652. This inaccuracy is of no great consequence: but how did he know that there was any date at all, as he says he never saw the picture?

"That Deborah Milton recognized her father's picture, does not prove that she might not have been still more struck with the likeness of the miniature. One is at a loss to know upon what ground it is assumed (by a person who never saw the picture or the print,) that, if Faithorne's be

like, the miniature is not like; and still less can it be conceived why he thinks that 'the likeness in Sir Joshua's picture cannot be a striking likeness of Milton, whatever it may be of Selden.' How came Selden into his head? Here some suspicion arises that he has seen the picture and the print, a circumstance which he chooses to conceal, as the comment by Sir Joshua on the print would have prevented the parade of his criticism.

"The opinion of Sir Joshua Reynolds, in matters relating to his own profession, certainly ought to have some weight. He is not likely to be wanting in that skill to which every other artist pretends, namely, to form some judgement of the likeness of a picture without knowing the original. It appears that Sir Joshua told Warton, that he was perfectly sure that 'the picture in his possession was a striking likeness, and that an idea of Milton's countenance cannot be got from any of the other pictures.' Without being an artist, it is easily perceived that the picture of Faithorne does not possess that individuality of countenance which is in the miniature.

"There is something very perverse in believing that an ordinary, common-place portrait, painted by an engraver for the purpose of making a print from it, should be preferred, or be supposed to be more like, than the best picture of the first miniature painter, perhaps, that ever lived. Cooper possessed all the correctness, precision, and all

the attention to peculiarity of expression, which we admire in Vandyke; whereas Faithorne imitated, as well as he could, the lax and vicious manner then introduced by Sir Peter Lely, who, though upon the whole an ingenious artist, stands in the first of what the painters call *mannerists*. We may add, in regard to Faithorne, that, however he might be distinguished among his contemporaries, and since by the curious in old prints, his merit as an engraver (and much less as a painter,) were he now living, would not raise him above the rank of the common herd of artists. It does not appear that Deborah Milton, when Faithorne's picture was shewn to her, said any thing to confirm us in the opinion of its being so extremely like; she exclaimed, 'O Lord! that is the picture of my father.' She probably had seen the picture before, and it is even probable that she was present when it was painted; and, when she saw it again, she immediately recognized it, as she would have done her father's watch, buckles, or any other appendage to his person.

“ There is no doubt but that Milton sat to Faithorne for that crayon picture; the distinguishing features are the same as in the miniature; the same large eyelid, the same shaped nose and mouth, and the same long line which reaches from the nostril to below the corners of the mouth, and the same head of hair; but if the effect and expression of the whole together should be, as in

fact it is, different in the two pictures, it cannot, I should think, be difficult for us to determine on which side our faith ought to incline, even though neither possessed any strong marks of identity.

“ All the objections that have been made by your correspondent, I hope, have been answered, and some, perhaps, which the reader will think were scarcely worthy of an answer. There is no occasion to take notice of objections which are made in order to be confuted, namely, the pains the critic takes to obviate a supposition which nobody ever supposed, that the writer of the memorandum on the back might, by mistake, write *her* death instead of *his* death. This is to raise conjectures in order to triumph in their confutation!

“ Mr. Tyrwhitt, to whom the miniature was shewn at the Archbishop of York’s table, and whose skill in matters of this kind is universally acknowledged, scouted the question which was there put to him, ‘ Whether he thought the manuscript was a late fabrication ;’ ‘ The orthography, as well as the colour of the ink, shews it to have been written a hundred years since.’ He then remarked the mistake of the writer in supposing that Deborah Milton was dead at the time he wrote ; and, though your correspondent thinks that this mistake is a sufficient reason for calling the whole a palpable fiction, we may reasonably oppose Mr. Tyrwhitt’s opinion to that of your anonymous correspondent, of whom we may say,

if he had possessed a greater share of critical sagacity, he would have remarked, that even the mistake of supposing Deborah Milton to be dead when he wrote, shew it to be *not* what he calls it, a fiction. A man who deals in fiction takes care, at least, not to be easily detected. No man in these later days but knows that Deborah Milton lived till 1727, as that circumstance was made notorious to the world from Richardson's *Life of Milton*, and from the benefit play which was given to Deborah's daughter in the year 1752. I believe Richardson (who, as Dr. Johnson says, was one of Milton's fondest admirers,) was the first who made any inquiry after Milton's family, and found his daughter Deborah to be still living.

“ I cannot conclude without making one observation. Before a writer indulges himself in the self-congratulation of victory, or laughing at the slip which he fancies others have made, he should be sure of the steadiness of his own footing.

“ Your correspondent reprehends Tom Warton for his inaccuracy in historical points; he blames the aggravated immorality of the seller of the picture ‘ in imposing on so fair and worthy a man as Sir Joshua Reynolds;’ treating him as a *bon homme*, and the whole ‘ as a palpable fiction, drawn up by some person ignorant of history, who furnished out a tale with very scanty materials.’ Whether this was the case, the reader will, I imagine, not find it very difficult to determine.

“ P. S. The progress of the picture seems to be this:—Milton dying insolvent, and Deborah Milton of course in great indigence, it is very improbable that she would keep to herself a picture of such value; it was therefore sold, as we suppose, to the author of the memorandum; and the account there given is probably such as he received from the seller of the picture, who, in order to raise its value, boasts how many great men had desired to have it. If to this it is urged, that it is too much to expect all those suppositions will be granted, we can only say, let the supposition be made of its being a forgery, and then see what insurmountable improbabilities will immediately present themselves. After all, the whole indulgence required is for the mistake respecting Deborah Milton’s death; and we may add, that the great object of inquiry, that it is an original picture of Milton by Cooper, is no way affected either by this or any other mistake that may be imputed to the writer of the memorandum.”

Liberal as Sir Joshua was to men of other professions, he was not wanting also to those of his own, as will appear from a very short note here introduced. I have not, indeed, scrupled to insert any original letters of Sir Joshua’s, although not containing matter of much importance, but merely because such articles are very rare from him, as he greatly disliked the employment of letter-writing, even when obliged to do it on business:

the following, however, contains something of advice. It was written to Mr. Charles Smith, an artist, at that time in the East Indies, where he was very successful in pourtraying some of the highest sovereigns of the East, from whom he received distinguished honours. He was the nephew of Mr. Caleb Whiteford.

London, Dec. 3, 1784.

“ DEAR SIR,

“ I take this opportunity of returning you, my sincere thanks for the present you was so obliging as to send me of the yellow colour, which is certainly very beautiful, and I believe will do very well in oil, though perhaps better with water.

“ I hope you meet with the success you so well deserve. I am only concerned that you are so much out of the way of making that improvement which your genius would certainly have enabled you to make, if you had staid in England. A painter who has no rivals, and who never sees better works than his own, is but too apt to rest satisfied, and not take what appears to be a needless trouble, of exerting himself to the utmost, pressing his genius as far as it will go.

“ I saw the other day, at Mr. Bromil's, a picture of a child with a dog, which, after a pretty close examination, I thought my own painting;

but it was a copy, it seems, that you made many years ago.

I am with great respect,

“ Your most obedient humble servant,

“ JOSHUA REYNOLDS.”

1785.

ÆTAT. 61.

At this period of his eminence, and in the year 1785, the Editor of a periodical publication came one morning to Sir Joshua while he was at breakfast. The purport of his visit was to collect particulars, in order to give some account of Sir Joshua's life in his magazine; but Reynolds being deaf, could not comprehend what it was he required: when the young lady, his niece, who was at the table, explained the business to him, by saying, “ Uncle, the gentleman wants your life; he comes for your life!”

But, for the execution of that friendly act of writing his life, he looked up to Burke, to Malone, or Boswell, as the distinguished authors who were to preserve his memory in an imperishable page. Little did he think it would ever fall to my lot to record his years thus imperfectly, or that those fostered friends of his would let him pass to the grave with such scanty notice; but let no man trust to what his favourites may do for his memory, when he himself is no more.

I think his chief dependence, with regard to writing his life, rested on Edmund Burke; of whom he had so high an opinion, that I have heard him say that even Dr. Johnson felt himself his inferior.

In this year, Sir Joshua painted that remarkable fine portrait of Mr. Joshua Sharpe, from which a mezzotinto print was taken by C. H. Hodges. This picture is particularly to be admired for its being a simple and accurate representation of the individual person, with a degree of truth that has never been surpassed by any painter that ever existed.

A friend of Sir Joshua's was remarking to him those peculiar excellences which gave the picture such high value, when Reynolds modestly answered, that it was no merit in him to do it, as it was only making an exact copy of the attitude in which the old man sat at the time, and as he remained still and quiet, it became a matter of no more difficulty in the representation than that of copying from a ham or any object of still life.

However, the merit of the artist was shown in his knowing the value of this simple and natural attitude, and in executing it with so much skill and precision.

In this year also he painted several very fine portraits, amongst which were those of the Duke of Orleans, who was afterwards guillotined, (this was one of his finest whole length pictures,) and

a very fine picture of the Duchess of Devonshire fondling her young child. They were in the exhibition of the following year, 1786, along with several others of his most celebrated pieces. Amongst these the Infant Hercules.

In this year the portrait of Sir Joshua, which was painted for, and afterwards in the possession of, Mr. Alderman Boydell, was executed by Mr. C. G. Stuart, an American, and for a time was placed in the Shakspear Gallery ; this is one of many which have been done, but was never engraved until 1802, by Messrs. Facius, in a small size.

The year 1785 was marked by several compliments to Sir Joshua's taste and genius.

Miss Hannah Moore, in her Poem on Sensibility, says,

“ To snatch bright beauty from devouring fate,
 And lengthen Nature's transitory date ;
 At once the critic's and the painter's art,
 With Fresnoy's skill, and Guido's grace impart ;
 To form with code correct the graphic school,
 And lawless fancy curb by sober rule ;
 To show how genius fires, how taste restrains,
 While what both are his pencil best explains,
 Have we not REYNOLDS ?”

To the merit of one of Sir Joshua's finest pictures produced this year, and exhibited, “ Love unloosing the Zone of Beauty,” the following poetic tribute was also paid.

“ Fann’d by the summer’s gentlest wind,
Within the shade a nymph reclin’d.
As on her neck they artless stray’d,
The zephyrs with her tresses play’d ;
A careless vest around her thrown
Was girded with an azure zone ;
Her figure shone replete with grace—
She seem’d—the goddess of the place.
The soothing murmur of the rill,
The plumed warbler’s tenderest trill,
The perfumed air, the flow’ry ground,
Spread a delicious langour round ;
Her swelling breast new tremors move,
And all her melting soul was love.
When Cupid saw her soft alarms,
And flew, insidious, to her arms ;
The little god she warmly prest,
And ruin, in his form, carest ;
For by indulgence hardy grown,
He slyly loos’d her guardian zone.
But Virtue saw the sleight, and sigh’d—
‘ Beware, beware, fond nymph !’ she cried ;
Behold where yonder thorny flower,
Smiling in summer’s radiant hour,
With outstretch’d wing a painted fly,
In thoughtless pleasure flutters nigh,
Nor, heedless, sees, beneath the brake,
The jaws of a devouring snake.’
The nymph look’d up—with conscience flush’d,
And as she tied her zone, she blush’d.
It chanc’d that Genius, passing by,
Remark’d the scene with eager eye ;
Then, with the tint from Virtue stole,
With REYNOLDS’ pencil sketch’d the whole.”

In the autumn of this year, the great and long expected sale of pictures, collected from the dissolved monasteries and religious houses in Flan-

ders and Germany, commenced on the twelfth of September, and continued during the ensuing month.

A trip to Flanders, therefore, became quite fashionable amongst the lovers of the fine arts, who were all anxious to possess some of the exquisite specimens of the great Flemish masters. For this purpose Sir Joshua also made a tour to that country, and laid out upwards of one thousand pounds in purchases, many of which were of great value, and which I shall have occasion to notice further in a subsequent part of the Memoir.

1786.

ÆTAT. 62.

IN the exhibition of 1786, Sir Joshua did not produce any historical piece, nor even any composition of fancy, his time and thoughts being occupied on a great work, having had the honour of a commission from the Empress of Russia to paint an historical picture, in which he was at liberty as to subject, size, and price.

He debated long with himself on what subject to fix, which might be complimentary to the Empress; and at first I heard him say he would paint the procession of our great Queen Elizabeth, when she visited her camp at Tilbury, in the time of the threatened Spanish invasion; but at last he made choice of the infant Hercules overcoming the

serpents when in his cradle, as the most fit, in allusion to the great difficulties which the Empress of Russia had to encounter in the civilization of her empire, arising from the rude state in which she found it. This picture he finished. It was a large and grand composition ; and in respect to beauty, colour, and effect, was equal to any picture known in the world. The middle groupe, which received the principal light, was exquisite in the highest degree.

The following lines on this picture are an extract from an Ode, by John Taylor, esq., a man whose benevolence of heart, in addition to his genius, renders him valuable to those who have the advantage of knowing him.

Reynolds, thy pencil fix'd my wand'ring view,
 Supreme in genius—worthy all thy fame ;
 Thy magic touch to taste and nature true,
 Secures for immortality a name.

Aye—here's the vig'rous son of am'rous Jove,
 Fruit of sly transports with Amphytrion's wife,
 Whose cradled strength with twining monsters strove,
 And crush'd out, giant like, the venom'd life.

Ah ! Reynolds, why should portrait thee confine,
 Whose stroke can epic force at once impart,
 Whose canvass with Homeric fire can shine
 And blaze with all the true sublime of art.

I have understood that Sir Joshua told a friend that the attitude and expression of the prophet Tiresias, introduced in the groupe, were taken

from those in which he had occasionally seen his deceased friend Johnson. It may be so, for his eye and mind were always intent to seize and fix the passing truth; and perhaps the truest criticism that ever Dr. Beattie hazarded on Sir Joshua's works was with regard to this very picture, when he said, in a letter to Sir William Forbes, "Your account of Sir Joshua's new picture is very entertaining. It is an unpromising subject; but Sir Joshua's imagination will supply every thing."

When it was finished, and had been exhibited at Somerset House, it was sent to Russia to the Empress.

Whether this compliment was ever explained to her, or whether she was left to suppose it alluded to the fate of her husband, I do not know; however, soon after the picture arrived at St. Petersburg, Count Woronzow, the Russian Ambassador at the court of England, waited on Sir Joshua Reynolds to inform him that the picture he painted last year for the Empress of Russia had been received at St. Petersburg, with two sets of his Discourses, one in English, and the other in French, which, at the desire of her Imperial Majesty, had been sent with the picture.

At the same time, Count Woronzow delivered to Sir Joshua a gold box, enriched with the Empress's portrait, and very large diamonds, &c., containing a most gracious writing by her Imperial Majesty's own hand. The Ambassador left also

with Sir Joshua a copy of the following letter, which his Excellency had received from the Empress with the said valuable present :

“ MONSIEUR LE COMTE WORONZOW,

“ I have read, and, I may say, with the greatest avidity, those Discourses pronounced at the Royal Academy of London, by Sir Joshua Reynolds, which that illustrious artist sent me with his large picture ; in both productions one may easily trace a most elevated genius.

“ I recommend to you to give my thanks to Sir Joshua, and to remit him the box I send, as a testimony of the great satisfaction the perusal of his Discourses has given me, and which I look upon as, perhaps, the best work that ever was wrote on the subject.

“ My portrait, which is on the cover of the box, is of a composition made at my Hermitage, where they are now at work about impressions on the stones found there.

“ I expect you will inform me of the price of the large picture, on the subject of which I have already spoke to you in another letter.

“ Adieu—I wish you well.

(Signed) “ CATHARINE.”

“ *St. Petersburg, March 5, 1790.*”

The portrait mentioned in the imperial letter, was a basso relievo of her Majesty : and Sir

Joshua's executors afterwards received fifteen hundred guineas for the painting, which is now at St. Petersburg. An engraving in mezzotinto was taken from it before it left England; and another print from it was done in Russia, by an English artist, patronized by that court.

The Infant Hercules, when it appeared at the exhibition, was placed over the chimney;* it was thus the first picture which presented itself to view from the entrance of the room, and had the most splendid effect of any picture I ever saw. I well remember the remark made on it by Hodges the landscape painter, as he first noticed it in the Exhibition Room, when, from the extraordinary rich tone of colouring, warm and glowing in the extreme, he said, that "it looked as if it had been boiled in brandy."

Barry also gives a very judicious account of this picture, which I shall insert. Although Barry cannot rank very high as a practical painter, he

* This choice of a conspicuous situation was due to the president—but the advantages of official precedence were then even carried further; for before I became a member of the Royal Academy, I once complained to Sir Joshua that my pictures had been disposed of in the exhibition in very disadvantageous situations, which I thought was not right in a body who were the guardians and protectors of the rising Artists; when he answered that I was quite mistaken, for that it was the exhibition of the Royal Academy alone, the members of which were first to be accommodated, whilst those who were not of the Academy must take their chance of such places as remained unoccupied.

was still a very excellent critic on many parts of the art ; and as this capital work of Sir Joshua is now gone from us into a far distant country, and totally lost to this nation, to which in future it can only be known by prints and by description, I am the more inclined to preserve this record of it.

“ Nothing can exceed,” he says, “ the brilliancy of light, the force, and vigorous effect of his picture of the Infant Hercules strangling the serpents: it possesses all that we look for, and are accustomed to admire in Rembrandt, united to beautiful forms, and to an elevation of mind to which Rembrandt had no pretensions ; the prophetic agitation of Tiresias, and Juno enveloped with clouds, hanging over the scene like a black pestilence, can never be too much admired, and are indeed truly sublime. It is very much to be regretted that this picture is in the hands of strangers, at a great distance from the lesser works of Sir Joshua, as it would communicate great value and eclat to them. What a becoming and graceful ornament would it be in one of the halls of the city of London.”

Reynolds himself, on taking leave of it, previous to its departure for Russia, said to a friend, that “ there were ten pictures under it, some better, some worse.” Such was his earnest desire to obtain excellence, and his modest opinion of the uncertainty in his practice.

After Sir Joshua had finished the Hercules, he painted a very fine picture, in the same style of

colour, on a three-quarter canvass, of a girl sleeping, resting with her head on her arm. This was one of his richest performances, and was in the exhibition of the year 1787, when Mr. Opie and myself were the managers for arranging the pictures; but we found great difficulty in placing it, being so powerful in its effect that it seemed to annihilate every other picture that was near it, and the conspicuous part of the room that was before desirable was no longer so for any picture when seen near this.

One day about this time, I dined at Sir Joshua's, in company with several other persons, one of whom was Dr. French Lawrence; it was at the time of Mr. Hastings's trial before the House of Lords; and Lawrence, who was the intimate friend and worshipper of Edmund Burke, had that morning attended the trial in Westminster-hall, where Burke had made a very long speech, with which Lawrence was enraptured. He repeated parts of it, as examples of the highest possible degree of feeling and eloquence, particularly when, describing the mode of torture that had been inflicted on the innocent and unfortunate Indians, Mr. Burke had thus expressed himself:—"Those cruel executioners had not been content with using the common and usual instruments of torture, but, with a shocking ingenuity, had sought out with difficulty those pernicious weeds which Nature had sown in her fretful moments with

which to torment their body and increase their anguish.”

I could not help saying that I thought this speech by far too studied and flowery to be expressive of much feeling, and that the orator seemed to be more occupied in displaying his own eloquence, than affected by the sufferings of those whose tale he told: for those who really feel are not apt to be so correct, so flowery, and so poetical; they trust only to the energy of Nature, which is still more eloquent, and always to be distinguished from that in which the orator attempts to show himself off. This remark immediately roused the Doctor's anger, and he answered in a rage, “It is you who want to show yourself off.” I then appealed to Sir Joshua, and asked him if he did not think the speech was studied, affected, and without feeling, and he immediately agreed with me in opinion.

I have already noticed the verifying of the authenticity of Milton's picture by Sir Joshua, to which I may add a discovery nearly similar, which has been stated by an anonymous writer, who says, that in this year he was so fortunate as also to meet with a valuable head of Oliver Cromwell, which had long remained concealed from the prying eye of antiquarian research in the false bottom of a gold snuff-box; and which was ascertained to be the original head painted by Cooper, for the use of Simons the sculptor, who was then engaged

in modelling a resemblance of the Protector. It was particularly valuable in being the only picture which Cooper finished of the Protector Oliver; for though the artist had prevailed upon Cromwell to sit a second time, yet, some difference or dispute having taken place, this latter was never completed, but is in that state now, in the possession of Sir Thomas Frankland, a descendant from that extraordinary man.

It was said that the picture had been shewn to his Majesty: and upon that occasion it was smartly observed, “How much would Charles the First have valued that man who had brought *him* the head of Cromwell?”

In his thirteenth discourse, delivered this year, Sir Joshua’s object was to shew, in illustration and explanation of his theory of Genius, that art is not merely imitation, but must be considered as under the direction of the imagination; after which he pointed out how far, and in what manner, painting, poetry, acting, even architecture and gardening, depart, or differ from nature.

Here he laid down what he esteemed as the highest style of criticism, and, at the same time, the soundest, in referring solely to the eternal and immutable nature of things; and this was, that any specific art, together with its principles, should be considered in their correspondence with the principles of other arts, or at least of such as address themselves primarily and principally to the

imagination. "When those connected and kindred principles," said he, "are brought together to be compared, another comparison will grow out of this; that is, the comparison of them all with those of human nature, from whence arts derive the materials upon which they are to produce their effects. When this comparison of art with art, and of all arts with the nature of man, is once made with success, our guiding lines are as well ascertained and established as they can be in matters of this description."

Some other truths, inculcated in this discourse, are of such high importance in general life, that I trust I shall be excused for giving a sketch of them; whilst, at the same time, they will display that deep thought which places Sir Joshua on a level, as a moralist, with the greatest philosophers; truths, too, not conceived in the silence of the closet, but extracted from human nature itself, in its various modifications, as they passed under his eye, or presented themselves in his daily intercourse with the ornaments of society.

He particularly noticed, that there is, in the commerce of life, as in art, a *sagacity* which is far from being contrary to right reason, and is superior to any occasional exercise of that faculty, which supersedes it, and does not wait for the slow progress of deduction, but goes at once, by what appears a kind of intuition, to the conclusion. A man, said he, endowed with this faculty, feels and

acknowledges the truth, though it is not always in his power, perhaps, to give a reason for it; because he cannot recollect, and bring before him, all the materials that gave birth to his opinion; for very many, and very intricate considerations may unite to form the principle, even of small and minute parts, involved in, or dependent on, a great system of things: though these, in process of time, are forgotten, the right impression still remains on the mind.

This impression, then, collected, we do not always know how, or when, he considered as the result of the accumulated experience of our life; and, therefore, this mass of collective observation, however acquired, ought to prevail over that reason which, however powerfully exerted on any particular occasion, will probably comprehend but a partial view of the subject. He, therefore, laid it down as a principle, that our conduct in life, as well as in the arts, is, or ought to be, generally governed by this habitual reason. It is our happiness, he added, that we are enabled to draw on such funds; if we were obliged to enter into a theoretical deliberation on every occasion, before we act, life would be at a stand, and art would be impracticable.

Speaking of "Imitation," he said that it is the *lowest style* only of arts, whether of painting, poetry, or music, that may be said, *in the vulgar sense*, to be naturally pleasing. "The higher

efforts of those arts, we know by experience, do not affect minds wholly uncultivated. This refined taste is the consequence of education and habit ; we are born only with a capacity of entertaining this refinement, as we are born with a disposition to receive and obey all the rules and regulations of society ; and so far it may be said to be natural to us, and no further."

His reasonings on the propriety of acting, and on the pleasures derived from it, are highly worthy the attention both of performers and the audience ; but they are too long even to give a slight sketch of them in this place : I shall therefore merely add his own conclusion to this discourse ; when he says, that " it is allowed on all hands, that facts and events, however they may bind the Historian, have no dominion over the Poet or the Painter. With us, History is made to bend and conform to this great idea of art. And why ? Because these arts, in their highest province, are not addressed to the gross senses ; but to the desires of the mind, to that spark of divinity which we have within, impatient of being circumscribed and pent up by the world about us. Just so much as our art has of this, just so much of dignity, I had almost said of divinity, it exhibits ; and those of our artists who possessed this mark of distinction in the highest degree, acquired from thence the glorious appellation of *Divine!*"

1787.

ÆTAT. 63.

WHEN Alderman Boydell projected the scheme of his magnificent edition of the plays of Shakspeare, accompanied with large prints from pictures to be executed by English painters, it was deemed to be absolutely necessary that something of Sir Joshua's painting should be procured to grace the collection ; but, unexpectedly, Sir Joshua appeared to be rather shy in the business, as if he thought it degrading himself to paint for a print-seller, and he would not at first consent to be employed in the work. George Stevens, the Editor of Shakspeare, now undertook to persuade him to comply, and taking a bank bill of five hundred pounds in his hand, he had an interview with Sir Joshua ; when, using all his eloquence in argument, he, in the mean time, slipt the bank bill into his hand ; he then soon found that his mode of reasoning was not to be resisted, and a picture was promised.

Sir Joshua immediately commenced his studies, and no less than three paintings were exhibited at the Shakspeare Gallery, or at least taken from that poet, the only ones, as has been very correctly said, which Sir Joshua ever executed for his illustration, with the exception of a head of King Lear, (done indeed in 1783,) and now in the possession

of the Marchioness of Thomond, and a portrait of the Hon. Mrs. Tollemache in the character of *Miranda*, in "The Tempest," in which *Prospero* and *Caliban* are introduced.

One of these paintings for the Gallery was Puck, or Robin Goodfellow, as it has been called, which, in point of expression and animation, is unparalleled, and one of the happiest efforts of Sir Joshua's pencil; though it has been said, by some cold critics, not to be perfectly characteristic of the merry wanderer of Shakspeare. It is now the property of Samuel Rogers, esq. *Macbeth*, with the Witches and the Cauldron, was another. and for this Mr. Boydell paid him one thousand guineas; but who is now the possessor of it I know not.

Much severe criticism was thrown out against his large picture of the scene in the tragedy of *Macbeth*; but my own opinion of this piece is, that the visionary and awful effect produced, both in the conception and execution of the back ground of this picture, is certainly without a parallel in the world—its novelty and its excellence bid defiance to all future attempts at rivalry. Had the figure of *Macbeth* been but equal in its requisite to this appalling scene, the picture would have stood without a companion on earth.

It recals to my memory a picture by Titian, in a church at Venice, although the subject is very dissimilar; yet, like that of *Macbeth* in its effect,

it represents the martyrdom of St. Lawrence by torch-light : but, as that picture was in a bad condition when I saw it, it was difficult to descry its highest degree of excellence.

The third was Cardinal Beaufort, for which 500 guineas were paid ; now the property of the Earl of Egremont. Of this latter picture an artist of great genius always declared, that it united the local colouring of *Titian* with the chiaro scuro of Rembrandt ; this is a just criticism : and another critic has observed, “ this picture of the dying Beaufort is truly an impressive performance ; the general hue of the picture is consonant to Shakspeare’s awful scene — sober — grand — solemn. — The excruciating agony of guilt and fear that writhes each limb, and fastens his convulsive fingers on the bed-clothes, makes each spectator shudder — and the face of the dying Cardinal has that agonized and horrid grin described by the poet—

‘ See how the pangs of death do make him grin.’ ”

This last is common newspaper criticism, of which much was poured forth at the time ; for this picture, when exhibited, excited great attention, and gave rise to much critical controversy : and with respect to the demon at the pillow of the dying Cardinal, there have been many objections made : nay, Sir Joshua was most earnestly importuned to erase it, but knew better than to comply.

These objections require to be combatted in vindication of the illustrious author of the work, as he did not seem inclined to do it for himself, although he could have so amply refuted them.

It must be allowed, that the first business of an historical painter is to make his picture tell its story distinctly, clearly, and quickly; or else he can claim but little merit to himself above that which belongs to the mechanical part, the mere operation of his hand.

The peculiar and characteristic essence of this subject, the death of the wicked Cardinal Beaufort, is, that the dying man's agonies do not proceed from bodily pain, so much as from the horrors of a guilty conscience. This is a distinction in expression, of so nice a kind in respect to its being pourtrayed, that perhaps Raffaele himself would have found it difficult to execute it: yet this important article of information must of necessity be decidedly and distinctly pronounced, or the subject is not explained. Even Shakspeare himself, in his text, has thought it requisite to employ his imagery in order to make his intentions more surely to be understood, by making the King say —

“ Oh, thou eternal mover of the Heavens,
Look with a gentle eye upon this wretch!
*Oh, beat away the busy meddling fiend
That lays strong siege unto this wretch's soul,
And from his bosom purge this black despair.*”

How much more necessary, then, is it to the painter, whose powers, in this respect, are so much more limited, by not being able to explain those circumstances which are past?

However, we have a right to conclude, that Sir Joshua was doubtful of the power in himself, and perhaps of the power in the art also, to compass the difficulty of explicitly and distinctly giving the just and clear expression of guilt, in contradistinction to bodily pain; which was absolutely necessary to explain the story; an explanation which, if not quickly given, is not well given; for the essence of painting is to produce and effect an instantaneous impression on the spectator: the introduction of the demon, therefore, does this, and leads the mind to further inquiry, and to investigate the more hidden excellencies of the work, and prevents the possibility, even for a moment, of mistaking it for the representation of a man dying in a mere painful bodily disease.

Having stated the great objections which were urged to Sir Joshua against his introduction of the demon at the pillow of the dying Cardinal Beaufort, I now offer my own idea, that Sir Joshua has not erred in introducing this demon, but in the execution of his intention; for, had he given this fiend a visionary, mysterious, and awful appearance, no one would or could have questioned its usefulness in the composition: but, on the contrary, he has made the figure too palpable and

material, and much too vulgar and mean in the idea of its form. Nay, its distinctness is such, that, had it not been rendered unfit and improbable, from its hideousness, it might have passed or been mistaken for an attendant page or dwarf, instead of a terrible and supernatural agent.

The late Mr. Opie, in his lectures, has touched upon this same subject, and it is with much gratification that I give the opinion of this most able critic, as it is so consistent with my own.

“The varied beauties of this work,” he says, “might well employ great part of a lecture, but, at present, I shall pass them over, and attend only to what relates immediately to the question before us—the effect of the visionary devil, couched close, and listening eagerly behind the pillow of the dying wretch; which not only invigorates and clothes the subject in its appropriate interest and terror, but immediately clears up all ambiguity, by informing us that those are not bodily sufferings which we behold so forcibly delineated; that they are not merely the pangs of death which make him grin; but that his agony proceeds from those daggers of the mind—the overwhelming horrors of a guilty and awakened conscience. This was the point on which rested the whole moral effect of the piece; it was absolutely necessary to be understood, and could by no other means have been so strongly and perspicuously expressed. An expedient, therefore, at once necessary, so

consistent with the spirit of the subject, and so completely successful, far from being regarded as an unwarrantable license, is justifiable by all rules of sound criticism, and ought to be regarded as one of the most signal examples of invention in the artist.”

Reynolds has been reprehended, by the critics, for having acted contrary to his own rules, laid down in his discourses, by introducing silk and velvet in this solemn historical picture of the death of Cardinal Beaufort; as he condemns the specification of individual stuffs in grand history: but surely he was perfectly justifiable in the introduction of silk and velvet in that picture, the subject of which may be considered as modern; and, as we are well assured that such draperies were then in use, and therefore required. Evidently he means to object to the practice of some of the best Flemish painters, who, representing the ascension of the Virgin into Heaven, surprize us when we behold her in a robe of white satin; or that of some of the French painters, who have clothed God the Father in a changeable silk! *

Whoever paints to the mind will eventually succeed; and no one must be discouraged in the

* So variable and humiliating is common opinion, that, in the same year that Sir Joshua received five hundred guineas from Alderman Boydell for this picture of the death of Cardinal Beaufort, his fine portrait of Nelly O'Brien was sold for ten guineas by public auction.

pursuit, because he meets with contradictory opinions as to the first and most alluring objects in his picture; as most persons, especially the uneducated, see differently: and to obey the capricious and unsettled humours of each, would be to sacrifice every thing that is just and noble in the art. An artist should calmly hear the opinions of all; but reserve it for the adoption of his future thought, how far he will or will not alter his design;—and he can scarcely hesitate too much, as the first thoughts are, generally speaking, more vigorous than those conceived and born afterwards, when the imagination and the judgment have been forced into action, and have generated ideas in obedience to the wishes of a cold observer.

It was proposed that Sir Joshua should also have executed the closet scene in Hamlet; but I believe it was never even begun.

I know it was not his desire to paint any circumstance in history of a complicated nature; his expression to me on that subject was, “That it cost him too dear.” His great pleasure was in those works of fancy in which might be shown beauty, expression, or character, in a single figure, or at most not more than two, and in those, when of his own choice, he was unrivalled by either ancient or modern artists.

How far it had ever been Sir Joshua’s intention to paint a scene out of the play of Hamlet, I do not know; but I remember, just about that time,

he repeated to me an observation of a great man on that very play.

The illustrious Charles Fox, conversing once with Sir Joshua Reynolds on the merits and demerits of Shakspeare, said it was his opinion, that Shakspeare's credit would have stood higher if he had never written the play of Hamlet.

This anecdote was told me by Sir Joshua himself.

I must confess, that my own opinion differs very much from this high authority. It seems to me, that, if there is one play of Shakspeare's which denotes genius above the others, it is that of Hamlet. Such an infinite and subtile discrimination of character, such feeling is displayed in it; it is rendered so exquisitely interesting, yet without the help of a regular plot, almost without a plan; so like in its simplicity to the progress of nature itself, that it appears to be an entire effusion of pure genius alone.

Mr. Sheridan related to Sir Joshua, that a small duodecimo volume had just been published, which professed by its title to contain the Beauties of Shakspeare. "I asked," said Mr. S. "when this little book was put into my hand, what was become of the other ten volumes?"

Besides those historical scenes from Shakspeare which Sir Joshua executed for that truest and greatest encourager of English Art that England ever saw, the late Alderman Boydell, that gentle-

man, who revered merit of every kind wherever he found it, also employed Sir Joshua's pencil, as the greatest painter, to pourtray for him the greatest hero of his day, the late Lord Heathfield, of Gibraltar; and this exquisite portrait, when finished, was exhibited in his gallery in Pall Mall.

This picture, which Sir Joshua executed of Lord Heathfield, in the year 1787, was of such extraordinary merit, as to have silenced instead of exciting envy; assuredly, therefore, I shall be pardoned if I give Mr. Barry's opinion of this portrait. After having bestowed high praise on the full length portrait of Mrs. Siddons as the Tragic Muse, he thus continues:—"And it is highly probable that the picture of Lord Heathfield, the glorious defender of Gibraltar, would have been of equal importance had it been a whole length; but even as it is, only a bust, there is great animation and spirit, happily adapted to the indications of the tremendous scene around him, and to the admirable circumstance of the key of the fortress firmly grasped in his hands; than which, imagination cannot conceive any thing more ingenious and heroically characteristic."*

* I cannot refrain recording a little anecdote as related by Lord Heathfield, at the time the painter was employed on the picture, whom he frequently diverted by some curious narrative, or amused by relating some droll anecdotes; one in particular, of a very rich Jew who resided in Prussia at the time of Frederick the Great, and was in high favour with his Majesty, and a very useful person to him. Certain apprehensions arising, however,

Barry's general remarks also appear to me to be very just and instructive, where he says, "Sir Joshua's object appears to have been to obtain the vigour and solidity of Titian, and the bustle and spirit of Vandyke, without the excesses of either; and in by far the greatest part of his portraits he has admirably succeeded."

The good offices of Sir Joshua through life were not confined to his intimate friends, but were often extended, particularly to professional men; one of whom in a great measure owed his success in the art to his advice, and to his recommendation of him, in this year, to the late Duke of Rutland, then setting out on his appointment to the vice-royalty of Ireland.

The person I allude to was a Mr. Pack, a native of Norwich, and who, from a fondness for the art, had copied many of Sir Joshua's paintings

in the Jew's mind, that a very wealthy subject was not in the most safe situation, while under an arbitrary sovereign, he resolved within himself to get out of the Prussian dominions, together with his property, as soon as he could accomplish it. But this he saw was not possible to be done till he had procured the King's consent. He, therefore, in the humblest and most cunning manner, wrote to Frederick to obtain his permission, alleging that both his health and affairs required his departure. But the more crafty King, who probably saw through his design, returned this short but affectionate answer—

“ My Dear Mordecai,

“ Nothing but death shall part us.

FREDERICK.”

with great accuracy, having been strongly recommended to him by a friend. Some time after this, Mr. Pack, who was a mercantile man, suffered considerably by his American connexions, and found it expedient to seek for support from that which he had practised before only as an amusement; and he was so successful in his Irish trip as to be tempted to risk his fate in London, where he afterwards practised with some little degree of fame.

This liberality of conduct, indeed, Sir Joshua practised frequently; and always candidly bestowed praise on his contemporaries, where due; and the following circumstance is an instance of it. One evening, at the Artists' Club, held at the Turk's Head, in Gerrard-street, Sir Joshua came into the room, having just before seen a very fine landscape, painted by Gainsborough, with which he had been exceedingly struck, from its extraordinary merit. He was describing its beauties to the members of the Club then present, and finished his eulogium by saying, "Gainsborough is certainly the first landscape painter now in Europe;" when the famous Richard Wilson, the landscape painter, who was one of the auditors of this high commendation, and who, from an excusable jealousy, felt himself offended, after begging leave to add also to this high character of Gainsborough, said, "Well, Sir Joshua, and it is my opinion that he is also the greatest portrait

painter at this time in Europe." Sir Joshua felt the rebuke, and immediately apologized for his inattention in making the observation in Wilson's company.

Notwithstanding this liberality towards Gainsborough, it was a notion held by Sir Joshua, and which I have heard him declare, "That it was impossible for two painters in the same department of the art to continue long in friendship with each other." This brings to my mind a geographical paradox, as it is called by Gordon in his Grammar, where he says, "There is a certain spot on this globe on which two men cannot stand at a time without quarrelling."

Of Gainsborough, he said, that he could copy Vandyke so exquisitely, that at a certain distance he could not distinguish the copy from the original, or the difference between them.

His manner he considered as peculiarly his own, and one producing great effect and force; and one day whilst examining a picture of his with considerable attention, he at length exclaimed, "I cannot make out how he produces his effect!"

Sir Joshua, at the solicitation of Gainsborough, sat one morning to him for his portrait, but being taken ill soon after this first sitting, he was obliged to go to Bath for the recovery of his health, and, at his return, sent to Gainsborough to inform him that he was ready to attend at any time he would appoint, in order to have the picture finished; but

Gainsborough never resumed the work, and therefore it was never completed: why he declined it is not known; probably because Sir Joshua had made no offer to return the compliment by engaging to paint the portrait of Gainsborough. But Sir Joshua never had such an intention, which I heard him declare.

1788.

ÆTAT 64.

No further intercourse took place between Reynolds and Gainsborough until the latter was on his death-bed, when his better feelings overcame his capriciousness, and he sent for Sir Joshua to thank him for the liberal manner in which he had always spoken of him in public and in private conversation.

Sir Joshua, indeed, had *proved* his opinion of his talents, by paying one hundred guineas for his well known picture of the "Girl attending Pigs."

Nothing can be more strongly expressive of Gainsborough's acknowledged goodness of heart, and of his ardent love for the profession, than the exclamation uttered whilst expiring—"We are all going to Heaven, and Vandyke is of the party!"

He was interred, on the 9th of August, in Kew Church-yard, with his name *alone* cut on his tomb-stone; Sir Joshua being one of the pall-bearers, together with Sir William Chambers, Mr. West

the present President, Mr. Meyers, and Messrs. T. Cotes, Sandby, and Bartolozzi. The ceremony was also attended by several other gentlemen eminent for abilities, particularly Mr. Sheridan, &c.

On pronouncing his eulogium, which took place this year at the usual delivery of the Discourse, Sir Joshua's praises were just, instructive, and eloquent.

The purport of the whole discourse, indeed, turned upon Gainsborough's character, together with his excellencies and defects; and, amongst other reasons for adopting this subject, he observed, that when we draw our examples from remote and revered antiquity, with some advantage undoubtedly in the selection, we expose ourselves to some inconveniencies, being, perhaps, led away too much by great names, and too much subdued by overbearing authority. He considered it, therefore, to be sometimes of service, that our examples should be near us; and be such as raise a reverence sufficient to induce us carefully to observe them, yet not so great as to prevent us from engaging with them in something like a generous contention.

With great justness Sir Joshua declared his opinion, that if ever this nation should produce genius sufficient to acquire for us the honorable distinction of an English School, then the name of Gainsborough will be transmitted to posterity, in the history of the art, among the very first of that ri-

sing name : and after shewing that he had owed much of his excellence to his love for the art, he expressed himself of him personally, with great candour in the following words :—“ Of Gainsborough we certainly know that his passion was not the acquirement of riches, but excellence in his art ; and to enjoy that honourable fame which is sure to attend it.—That *he felt this ruling passion strong in death*, I am myself a witness. A few days before he died, he wrote me a letter to express his acknowledgments for the good opinion I entertained of his abilities, and the manner in which (he had been informed) I always spoke of him ; and desired he might see me once more before he died. I am aware how flattering it is to myself to be thus connected with the dying testimony which this excellent painter bore to his art. But I cannot prevail on myself to suppress, that I was not connected with him, by any habits of familiarity : if any little jealousies had subsisted between us, they were forgotten in those moments of sincerity ; and he turned towards me as one who was engrossed by the same pursuits, and who deserved his good opinion by being sensible of his excellence. Without entering into a detail of what passed at this last interview, the impression of it upon my mind was, that his regret at losing life, was principally the regret of leaving his art ; and more especially as he now began, he said, to see what his deficiencies were ; which, he said,

he flattered himself, in his last works, were, in some measure, supplied.”

The remainder of this discourse, the fourteenth, was dedicated to a comparison of Gainsborough with some other landscape painters, and it contains many most judicious observations, alike useful to the critic and the artist.

I must also remark, that Sir Joshua was by no means scrupulous of openly confessing the gratification he received from whatever species of art or ingenuity came to his knowledge. He was a prodigious admirer of the invention and striking effect of the Panorama in Leicester-fields, and went repeatedly to see it. He was the first person who mentioned it to me, and earnestly recommended me to go also, saying it would surprise me more than any thing of the kind I had ever seen in my life; and I confess I found it to be as he had said.*

About this time, a most eminent dramatic character had composed an excellent poem, which he purposed dedicating to Sir Joshua, and accordingly called on him one morning, and read it to him. When Sir Joshua, probably conceiving that praise of his professional powers would be most gratifying to the performer, said, with much simplicity,

* Sir Joshua, when going on a visit to Sir Abraham Hume, at his country residence at Wormleybury, was much pleased by the strict propriety of an inscription on a sign at a farrier's shop which he saw on the road, which says—

“Horses shod agreeable to Nature,
“And according to Art.”

“ I can scarcely pass my judgment on the poem ; you have read it so extraordinary well, that perhaps any poetry so read would appear fine.”— The author put the poem into his pocket, soon took his leave, and was not so well pleased as to dedicate his work to Sir Joshua after this species of compliment.

To compliment any man on those particular talents which the world has acknowledged he possesses, is to him but faint praise, especially when he pants for fame in another department ; as it has been observed of Cardinal Richlieu, that those who wished to gain his favour succeeded best when they pretended to be enraptured with his poetry, and said nothing of his political powers.

I cannot omit giving an observation which Sir Joshua made on Plymouth, in the immediate neighbourhood of his birth place. He remarked that we had the fewest admirers of pictures and prints in Plymouth of any town of its size that he knew of, and asked me if we had a bookseller at Plymouth.

There was too much truth in this remark, as there never has been seen a print of value exhibited in any of the shops in that place.

It was about this period (though I cannot recollect the exact date) that Sir Joshua was persuaded by Mr. Boswell to attend an execution of criminals on the scaffold in the front of Newgate. The particular inducement at this time was, that one

of the persons who was to suffer had formerly lived as servant in Mr. Thrale's family, and was now condemned to death for robbery. When this unfortunate man came upon the platform he quickly recognised Sir Joshua, (whom he had frequently attended at Mr. Thrale's,) and made him a humble bow, though thus on the very verge of existence.

Sir Joshua was attacked in the daily papers on this occasion, and accused of a want of proper feeling in attending to behold such awful sights: as it was observed, that of Mr. Boswell it might have been expected, but in a man of the elegant and refined mind of Sir Joshua, it was extraordinary.

But surely an artist may be excused for once even if he had gone to satisfy his curiosity; if we reflect that he is one whose business it is to study the human countenance, under all its varieties of expression, it becomes, in fact, almost a duty on him, however terribly it may operate on his feelings at the moment; as he there surveys persons in the most awful circumstances possible, and such as are to be found scarcely any where else, except where personal danger would justly preclude scientific observation.

Sir Joshua's general feelings may also be sketched from the following anecdote.

Mr. Copley, the painter, on his return from Switzerland, where he had been on a visit, was

relating to Sir Joshua, at a meeting of the members of the Royal Academy, what he had seen abroad that was curious ; and, amongst other matters, said he had been in company with Werter's Charlotte ; but Sir Joshua not comprehending whom he meant, Copley explained ; when Sir Joshua replied, " I am ashamed to say that I have never read the story of Werter and Charlotte." I then said that I thought it would have been more proper for him to have been ashamed if he had read it, as it was a novel, and only fit reading for young girls. He tartly answered, that I was in the wrong ; for that it was his place to have read that which every person else had read.

Of the many portraits of Sir Joshua himself, by his own hand, the last which he painted was executed this year ; it is a three quarter length, with spectacles, representing him familiarly, as in common domestic life. Of this picture there are several duplicates : one in the possession of the Duke of Leeds ; but his niece, the Marchioness of Thomond, possesses the original.

The well known satirical and descriptive production, called " Modern Characters from Shakspeare," was published this year. The passages, from the *Winter's Tale* and *Timon*, applied to Sir Joshua, are so well selected, that I cannot refuse them a place here.

The first was—" That rare master, who, had he himself eternity, and could put breath into his work, would beguile nature of her custom." The

second—"Admirable! how this grace speaks his own standing! what a mental power this eye shoots forth! how big imagination moves in this lip!" To the dumbness of the gesture one might interpret——I'll say of it——

"It tutors Nature: artificial strife
Lives in these touches livelier than life."

1789.

ÆTAT. 65.

I COME now to a most unfortunate era in the life of this great artist, when he encountered a heavy dispensation, the heaviest that could befall a professional man, the partial loss of his sight.

Mr. Malone, whose intimacy with Sir Joshua, at the time, enabled him to be perfectly correct in his statement, says, that he for the first time perceived this failure in the month of July, whilst giving nearly the last finishing to a portrait of the present Marchioness of Hertford. This of course, was the last female portrait which he ever painted; for, finding it difficult to proceed, he immediately desisted, and in a few months afterwards he totally lost the use of his left eye, notwithstanding all the care of the most skilful practitioners in the branch of surgery applicable to such cases.

Amongst the last of his portraits of men, were those of Messrs. Windham and Cholmondeley, of Lord Macartney, never finished, and of Mr. Fox.

I mention these circumstances particularly in

this place, because he now found it absolutely necessary to abstain from the use of his pencil, lest his remaining eye should also be affected; a determination which cost him great pain, and required great resolution to adhere to, as it deprived him of his best and dearest source of enjoyment, though he still ventured to read a little, or to listen to others; nor did he find himself deprived of the society of his friends, his misfortune not having affected his equal mind so much as to render him peevish or discontented. Indeed, like a philosopher, he endeavoured to console himself by the pleasures left him, more than to lament the loss of those of which he was deprived.

The mental sufferings of Sir Joshua, under the failure of his sight, were, perhaps, greater than he was willing to acknowledge; and he who, during his former life, had been perpetually and earnestly employed in works destined to delight the world, and add, in part, to the immortality even of the illustrious, when represented as he could represent them, being now prevented, by the unavoidable infirmities of human nature, from occupying himself in those studies that had raised his name so high, was reduced to fill up the tedious lingering hours, by such humble amusements, as could afford any consolation in a state to him so new.

Part of his attention was, in consequence, bestowed upon a little tame bird, which like the favourite spider of the prisoner in the Bastille,

served to pass away a lonely hour: but this proved also a fleeting pleasure; for on a summer morning, the window of the chamber being, by accident or carelessness, left open, the little favourite took his flight, and was irrecoverably lost, although its master wandered for hours in the square before the house in hopes to reclaim it, yet in vain.

The late Mr. Ozias Humphries was then frequently with him; and by accident he, one day, read a newspaper to him at his house in Leicester Square, when Sir Joshua appeared to be much gratified. Mr. Humphries, considering that Miss Palmer, Sir Joshua's niece, the present Marchioness of Thomond, was then in the country, thought that to read the newspapers to him daily, might not be unacceptable; he therefore resolved, though unostentatiously, to do this, and as he himself always breakfasted in St. James's Street at eight o'clock, he had finished and was in time to be with his friend before nine, Sir Joshua's breakfast hour. This he never omitted to repeat, for a considerable time till the return of his niece, when she performed that office as she had usually done. But Sir Joshua Reynolds, who, from feeling, knew what would be gratifying to an artist, provided that two fresh pictures of his numerous and valuable collection, should be placed daily in succession in his drawing room (as he was pleased to express it) for their mutual consideration and benefit:—thus contriving to reward him tenfold

for the trifling civility of reading to him the daily papers.

Being, as I have observed, in a great degree become dependent on others for his amusements, the pleasures he required were of an intellectual kind, and of these pleasures, he found many in the friendly intercourse of the *Literary Club*, which, however, was, in some measure, interrupted by the politics of that period, if we are to judge from a letter of Sir William Jones to Sir Joseph Banks, written in the latter end of this very year: "I wish politics at the devil; but hope, that when the King recovered, Science revived. It gives me great pain to know, that *party*, as it is called, (I call it *faction*, because I hold party to be grounded on principles, and faction on self-interest,) has found its way into a Literary Club, who meet reciprocally to impart and receive new ideas. I have deep-rooted political principles, which the law taught me; but I should never think of introducing them among men of science: and if, on my return to Europe, ten or twelve years hence, I should not find more science than politics in the club, my seat in it will be at the service of any politician who may wish to be one of the party."

Sir William Jones, however, did not live to return; nor did Sir Joshua, indeed, mingle in those debates to which he alludes, but preserved the same friendly tenor of conduct and suavity of manners to his associates there, that he exercised

towards all men in private life: for politics never amused him nor ever employed his thoughts a moment.

His kindness of manner and readiness to oblige were particularly exemplified by a little incident which happened this year, thus noticed by Mr. Dayes, the artist, who says, “Malice has charged him with avarice; probably from his not having been prodigal like too many of his profession. His offer to me proves the contrary. At the time that I made the drawings of the King at St. Paul’s, after his illness, Reynolds complimented me handsomely on seeing them, and afterwards observed, that the labour bestowed must have been such, that I could not be remunerated from selling them; but if I would publish them myself, he would lend me the money necessary, and engage to get me a handsome subscription among the nobility.”

Sir Joshua acted with benevolence and justice in this offer to assist industry.

Of all charities, that of *employing* the poor is the most charitable, and best patronage. It is in a manner to double the obligation by lessening it; it being more grateful to any man to put him in a capacity of relieving himself, than to make him a pensioner to others. It is turning a bounty into a reward, and promoting industry. For industry is the heir apparent to bounty; poverty but the presumptive heir.

1790.

ÆTAT. 66.

AN unhappy difference now took place between the President and the Royal Academy, which made considerable noise, and has often been related by various writers, according (in some measure) to the feelings which they had in the business. I shall endeavour, however, to state the whole affair as impartially as possible; but according to my own conception of the business, which is very well told by an obscure author in a pamphlet published at the time, who says, that in the year 1790, Sir Joshua Reynolds (probably at the request of the Earl of Aylesford) possessed a very anxious desire to procure the vacant professorship of Perspective, in the Academy for Mr. Bonomi, an Italian architect; and as Mr. Bonomi had not yet been elected an associate, and of course was not an academician, it became a necessary step to raise him to those situations, in order to qualify him for being a professor. The election proceeded, and Mr. Gilpin was a competitor for the associateship with the Italian architect. The numbers on the ballot proved equal, and the President gave the casting vote for his friend Mr. Bonomi, who was thereby advanced so far towards the professorship. On the vacancy of an aca-

demie seat by the death of Mr. Meyers, Sir Joshua Reynolds exerted all his influence to obtain it for Mr. Bonomi; but a spirit of resistance appeared, (owing, I believe, to some misconception, or to some informality on the part of Sir Joshua, in producing some drawings of Bonomi's) and Mr. Fuseli was elected an academician by a majority of two to one. The President then quitted the chair with great dissatisfaction; and on the following day (the 12th of February) Sir Joshua Reynolds, who for twenty-one years had filled the chair of the Royal Academy, with honour to himself and his country, sent his resignation to Mr. Richards, the Secretary of the Academy. But the first letter he is said to have withdrawn, as being rather too warm, and in its place substituted the following :

“TO THE SECRETARY OF THE ROYAL ACADEMY.

Leicester Fields, Feb. 22, 1790.

“ SIR,

I beg you would inform the Council, which I understand meet this evening, with my fixed resolution of resigning the Presidency of the Royal Academy, and consequently my seat as Academician. As I can be no longer of any service to the Academy, as President, it would be still less in my power in a subordinate station; I therefore now take my final leave of the Academy, with

my sincere good wishes for its prosperity, and with all due respect to its members.

“ I am Sir,

“ Your most humble and most obedient servant,

“ JOSHUA REYNOLDS.”

“ P. S. Sir William Chambers has two letters of mine, either of which, or both, he has a full liberty to communicate to the Council.”

A council was soon after held, and the subject of their deliberation was, the resignation of the President. A letter from Sir Joshua to Mr. Richards was then read, declaring his resolution to resign the presidency of the Royal Academy. A letter from Sir William Chambers to Sir Joshua was also read; this was addressed to Sir Joshua in consequence of Sir William's interview with the King, in an early stage of this business; and, among other flattering marks of the Sovereign's favour, the letter expressed, “ That his Majesty would be happy in Sir Joshua's continuing in the President's chair.”

Sir Joshua's letter to Sir William Chambers, in reply, stated in effect, “ That he inferred his conduct must have been hitherto satisfactory to his Majesty, from the very gratifying way in which his Royal pleasure had been declared; and, if any inducement could make him depart from his original resolution, the will of his Sovereign would prevail; but that, flattered by his Majesty's ap-

proval to the last, there could be nothing that was not perfectly honourable in his resignation; and that, in addition to this determination, as he could not consistently hold the subordinate distinction of Royal Academician, after he had so long possessed the chair, he begged also to relinquish that honour."

All idea of now soothing Sir Joshua, by any proceeding of the Academy, since the Sovereign's wishes had been of no avail, was rejected as superfluous and inconsistent.

Immediately on Sir Joshua's resignation, the following lines were addressed to him by a Nobleman of genius, which I insert because they contain characteristic truths, and elegance of poetry. Some other verses were addressed to him by different persons but none of equal merit.

TO SIR JOSHUA REYNOLDS, &c. &c.

" Too wise for contest, and too meek for strife,
Like Lear, oppress'd by those you rais'd to life,
Thy scepter broken, thy dominion oe'r,
The curtain falls, and thou'rt a king no more.
Still near the wreck of thy demolished state;
Truth, and the weeping Muse with me shall wait;
Science shall teach Britannia's self to moan,
And make, O injured Friend! thy wrongs her own.

" Shall we forget when, with incessant toil,
To thee 'twas given to turn this stubborn soil;
To thee with flowers to deck our dreary waste,
And kill the poisonous weeds of vicious taste;
To pierce the gloom where England's genius slept,
Long of soft love and tenderness bereft;

From his young limbs to tear the bands away,
And bid the infant giant run and play ?

“ Dark was the hour, the age an age of stone,
When Hudson claimed an empire of his own ;
And from the time when, darting rival light,
Vandyke and Rubens cheered our northern night,
Those twin stars set, the Graces all had fled,
Yet paused to hover o’er a Lely’s head ;
And sometimes bent, when won with earnest prayer,
To make the gentle Kneller all their care ;
But ne’er with smiles to gaudy Verrio turned ;
No happy incense on his altars burned.
O witness, Windsor, thy too passive walls,
Thy tortured ceilings, thy insulted halls !
Lo ! England’s glory, Edward’s conquering son,
Cover’d with spoils from Poitiers bravely won ;
Yet no white plumes, no arms of sable hue,
Mark the young hero to our ravished view ;
In buskin trim, and laurelled helmet bright,
A well-dressed Roman meets our puzzled sight ;
And Gallia’s captive king, how strange his doom,
A Roman too perceives himself become !

“ See too the miracles of God profaned,
By the mad daubings of this impious hand.
For while the dumb exult in notes of praise,
While the lame walk, the blind in transport gaze,
While vanquished demons Heaven’s high mandates hear,
And the pale dead spring from the silent bier,
With laced cravat, long wig, and careless mien,
The painter’s present at the wondrous scene !

“ Vanloo and Dahl, these may more justly claim
A step still higher on the throne of fame ;
Yet to the west their course they seem to run,
The last red streaks of a declining sun.

“ And must we Jervas name ? so hard and cold,
In ermine, robes, and peruke only bold ;
Or when inspired, his rapturous pencil own
The rolled-up stocking, and the damask gown,

Behold a tasteless age in wonder stand,
 And hail him the Apelles of the land!
 And Denner too;—but yet so void of ease,
 His figures tell you they're forbid to please;
 Nor in proportion, nor expression nice,
 The strong resemblance is itself a vice:
 As wax-work figures always shock the sight,
 Too near to human flesh and shape, affright,
 And when they best are form'd afford the least delight. }

“ Turn we from such to thee, whose nobler art
 Rivets the eye, and penetrates the heart;
 To thee whom nature, in thy earliest youth,
 Fed with the honey of eternal truth:
 Then, by her fondling art, in happy hour,
 Enticed to learning's more sequest'ed bower.
 There all thy life of honours first was planned,
 While nature preached, and science held thy hand.
 When, but for these, condemned perchance to trace
 The tiresome vacuum of each senseless face,
 Thou in thy living tints had ne'er combined
 All grace of form, and energy of mind.
 How, but for these, should we have trembling fled
 The guilty tossings of a Beaufort's bed;
 Or let the fountain of our sorrows flow
 At sight of famished Ugolino's woe?
 Bent on revenge, should we have pensive stood
 O'er the pale cherubs of the fatal wood,
 Caught the last perfume of their rosy breath,
 And viewed them smiling at the stroke of death?
 Should we have questioned, stung with rage and pain,
 The spectre line with the distracted Thane?
 Or with Alcmena's natural terror wild,
 From the envenomed serpent torn her child?
 “ And must no more thy pure and classic page
 Unfold its treasures to the rising age?
 Nor from thy own Athenian temple pour
 On list'ning youth of art the copious store;
 Hold up to labour independent ease,
 And teach ambition all the ways to please;

With ready hand neglected Genius save,
Sickening, o'erlook'd in Misery's hidden cave;
And, nobly just, decide the active mind
Neither to soil, nor climate is confined?

“ Desert not then thy sons, those sons who soon
Will mourn with me, and all their error own.
Thou must excuse that raging fire, the same
Which lights their daily course to endless fame;
Alas! impels them thoughtless far to stray
From filial love, and Reason's sober way.
Accept again thy power, resume the chair,
“ Nor leave it, till you place an Equal there.”

Even an imitator of Peter Pindar, in his eccentric way, laments also what he considered as improper treatment of this great painter, and in his verse attempts to immortalize that head which had so often, assisted by its hand, to immortalize the heads of so many others; and this the witty poet compares to that of Orpheus, which, on his being torn to pieces, was carried down the stream and drifted to the island of Lesbos. The passage is in a poem called, “ More Lyric Odes to the Royal Academicians.

“ Now I've been thinking, if our Reynolds' head
Should, on his palette, down the Thames drive souse,
And mindful of the walls he once arrayed
Bring to, a bit, at Somerset new house;
What scramblings there would be, what worlds of pains
Among the artists to possess his brains.
And like Neanthus for great Orpheus' lyre,
Some for his palette would be raising frays,
In hopes, no doubt, the wood would each inspire
To paint like him for—fame in better days;

As if a soldier, who'd no legs to use,
Should fight for his dead comrade's boots and shoes.

Reynolds, when I reflect what sons of fame
Have shar'd thy friendship, I with sighs regret
That all have died a little in thy debt,

And left a trump unknown to swell thy name ;
But courage friend ! when Time's relentless tooth
Hath nibbled mountains to the ground smack smooth,
And pick'd, as one would pick a savoury bone,
Each monument of iron, and brass, and stone ;—
Thy name shall live, and like heav'n's sacred fire
Succeeding artists kindle, and inspire."

Every Academician now regretted the unforeseen consequence of the unfortunate disagreement; however, the whole body shewed so liberal a desire to retain Sir Joshua in the chair, that, after agitating those unpleasant differences between the president and the academy with as much delicacy as possible, it was determined that a delegation of the following gentlemen, to wit, Messrs. West, Farrington, Cosway, Catton, Sandby, Bacon, Copley, Russel, and the Secretary, should wait upon Sir Joshua, and lay before him the resolution which the Academy had come to in order to produce a conciliatory effect. The resolution was in substance as follows ;

“ That it appeared, when the drawings of Mr. Bonomi were introduced at the election, Sir Joshua, by whose directions they were brought in, had certainly acted in conformity to the intentions of the council, as appeared by an order entered on their books; but that, such order not going

through the regular forms necessary to constitute a law, the full body of Academicians remained ignorant of the proceeding, and therefore fell into an error in ordering the drawings to be removed. But, as they unanimously professed that no personal disrespect was intended towards Sir Joshua, they trusted he would be prevailed upon to comply with the wishes of the King, and continue in the Presidency of the Royal Academy."

The above delegates accordingly waited upon Sir Joshua, to entreat him to withdraw his letter of resignation, and resume his situation as President of an institution to which his talents had been so long an essential support. They had an interview with him at his house in Leicester Square, and were received with great politeness; and every mark of respect was expressed by those who had hitherto been deemed least cordial to the interests of the President. Upon a full explanation of the intentions and views of the Academy being made, and their wishes expressed that Sir Joshua would continue to adorn the presidency, he, after a handsome declaration of his gratitude for this honourable proceeding towards him, consented to resume the chair, and the whole of the delegates were invited to dine with him, in order to convince them that he returned to his office with sentiments of the most cordial amity.

On the suggestion of Lord Lansdowne, it was thought that Sir Joshua could not resume the

chair till he had the proper authority of the King. For this, in due form, Lord Lansdowne applied; and when granted, this great artist attended at Somerset House, to be restored to all his honours in full assembly of the members.

Shortly after this, Sir Joshua delivered his fifteenth and *last* discourse, in which he took leave of the Academy, on the 10th of December, 1790: a discourse which gave a foreign artist, of considerable celebrity, occasion to say, that if he had only heard this final oration in praise of Michael Angelo, and seen that great national ornament, Somerset House, he should have been certain that the English nation were far advanced in the highest departments of art.

On this interesting occasion, Sir Joshua observed, that the intimate connexion which he had maintained with the Royal Academy ever since its establishment, and the social duties in which he and its members had been mutually engaged for so many years, rendered any profession of attachment on his part altogether superfluous; as, independent of other causes, such attachment would naturally have been produced in such a connexion, by the influence of habit alone. He modestly hinted at the little differences which had arisen; but expressed his wish that such things should be lost amongst the members in mutual esteem for talents and acquirements, and that every controversy would be sunk in general zeal for the perfection of that art common to them all.

In parting with the Academy, he declared that he would remember with pride, affection, and gratitude, the support with which he had almost uniformly been honoured, from the commencement of the Establishment; and that he should leave it with unaffected cordial wishes for its future concord, and with a well-founded hope, that in that concord, the auspicious, and not obscure, origin of the Academy, might *not* be forgotten in the splendor of succeeding prospects.

He then, with his usual modesty, assigned his reasons for thus voluntarily giving those periodical discourses.

“ If prizes were to be given, it appeared not only proper but almost indispensably necessary; that something should be said by the President on the delivery of those prizes, and the President, for his own credit, would wish to say something more than mere words of compliment; which, by being frequently repeated, would soon become flat and uninteresting, and by being uttered to many, would at last become a distinction to none. I thought, therefore, if I were to preface this compliment with some instructive observations on the art, when we crowned merit in the artists whom we rewarded, I might do something to animate and guide them in their future attempts.”

Though Sir Joshua had not actually made his final resignation at this period, yet it is evident that he contemplated it, as he observed that his

age and infirmities made it probable that this would really be his last address ; and he added, with a degree of philosophy worthy of imitation, that excluded as he was from indulging his imagination with a distant and forward perspective of life, so he trusted that he would be excused for turning his eyes back on the way that he had passed.

To follow him through this review of his professional life and discourses would far exceed my proposed limits ; but I may be permitted to say, that if he did not absolutely feel the ruling passion strong in death, yet he appeared to express its strongest sentiments in what may thus be called his professional demise, which he concluded with these remarkable words, after having expatiated on the exalted genius of his favourite master—

“ I feel a self-congratulation in knowing myself capable of such sensations as he intended to excite. I reflect, not without vanity, that these discourses bear testimony of my admiration of that truly divine man ; and I should desire that the last words which I should pronounce in this Academy, and from this place, might be the name of—*Michael Angelo!*”

On the evening of the delivery of this discourse one remarkable circumstance occurred, which, at the moment, not a little alarmed the company there assembled, and was this. At the time when Sir Joshua was delivering his oration

to a very numerous and even crowded audience, composed of persons of the highest rank in the state, as well as all those who were the most eminent in art, and just at the moment when a respectful and solemn silence prevailed, on a sudden, a loud crash was heard, and a sensation felt, as if the floor of this great room, which is at the top of the house, was giving way and falling. The company immediately took the alarm, and rushed towards the door, or to the sides of the room, tumbling one over the other, in the utmost confusion and consternation, expecting, every moment, that the floor would fall away, and precipitate them down to the lower part of the building.

Sir Joshua was silent, but did not move from his seat: when, after some little time, the company perceiving that the danger had ceased, most of them resumed their places, and Sir Joshua calmly continued his discourse, as coolly as if nothing extraordinary had occurred.

On an examination of the floor afterwards, it was found that one of the beams for its support had actually given way from the great weight of the assembly of persons who pressed upon it, and probably from a flaw also in the wood.

I remember the remark Sir Joshua made on this accident was, that if the floor had really fallen, most of the persons assembled must have been crushed to death in consequence; and if so, the arts, in this country, would have been thrown two hundred years back.

But, providentially, no ill effect was produced by the circumstance.

Sir Joshua's inability to pursue his profession did not, however, sour his mind against the increasing fame of his cotemporaries, as appears from his observation respecting the alarming occurrence, at the delivery of his last discourse; and such was his opinion, in respect to the progress the arts had then made in England, and as he imagined, were still making towards perfection, that, in conversation with me once, he ventured to predict, that the arts would so improve in this country, and in future years arrive to such a state of excellence, as that "all we can now achieve," he said, "will appear like children's work in comparison with what will be done."

I cannot coincide with this opinion, as far as it respects his own works, which I do not think he seemed to rate so high as they deserve. The only allusion to any merit in his own efforts that I can recollect him ever to have made, is once hearing him say, "That lovers had acknowledged to him, after having seen his portraits of their mistresses, that the originals had appeared even still more lovely to them than before, by their excellencies being so distinctly pourtrayed." Yet although his own opinion of his works was so humble, that I have heard him *confess his terror at seeing them exposed in the bright light of the Sun*; it cannot be doubted that justice was done to his merits in foreign countries: for, even previous to this pe-

riod, when the French Ambassador, count D'Adhemar, was leaving England, he intimated to Sir Joshua, that he would contrive to have him invited to Paris to paint the portrait of the then Queen Maria Antonetta. This I heard Sir Joshua relate, and when one in company said, "Why then you would be required to paint so many of that court, that we should never get you home again," Sir Joshua answered that such should not be the case, for he would make a resolution before he went, to paint no other person in France but the Queen.

Whether portrait painting will ever be carried much further than Sir Joshua has carried it, I have my doubts ; but, in respect to the arts in general, I think our countrymen fully qualified to verify the above prediction of Sir Joshua. It is my firm opinion, that had there been the same encouragement and opportunity offered to the arts in this country that have been afforded to them in Italy and France, we should have seen how British powers and talents would have burst forth, and also that laudable ambition, that activity and spirit of enterprize, that good sense and sound judgment, that originality and strength of character, which so particularly mark the people of this empire, that freedom of thinking for themselves which prevents the servile imitation of each other, so constantly found in most other countries, especially in France : when these are all considered, how much

more than probable is it that we should have seen such works of excellence and variety produced as no age or country have ever seen equalled ; and thus Raffaelles and Corregios might have risen to rival the Apelles and Zeuxis of the ancients, as well as a Milton and Shakspeare to vie with Homer and Euripides.

But this vain hope is never to be realized in our isles ; as no great and adequate cause is likely ever to occur to give the impetus, or to spur genius on to great exertions : and without some eminently powerful cause, it becomes a moral impossibility to be accomplished.

Notwithstanding the great excellence of Sir Joshua's work, many of them were rejected, and others never paid for. Once as I was passing through his gallery with him, he pointed to one of his own paintings, containing a group of portraits, in a picture which had been left upon his hands, saying, with a smile, " Pity so much good work should be thrown away for nothing !"

I remember a nobleman, when seeing his own full length portrait in the exhibition, which had been painted by Sir Joshua, but was never paid for, expressed his surprize to a friend who was then in his company, that painters should complain of any want of employment—" See there," said he, " that portrait of myself, with many others in this room, proves they cannot want employment."

He used to say he could not dun persons for debts whom he was continually in the habit of meeting at dinner parties.

Sir Joshua once, very unintentionally, mortified a lady extremely, who was sitting to him for her portrait. When she offered to sit to him for the hands also, (she esteemed her own to be very fine,) he answered, innocently, "that he would not give her so much trouble, as he commonly painted the hands from his servants!"

Another time a gentleman, who sat to him for his portrait, complained that Sir Joshua had not sufficiently finished the ruffles nor made out the pattern of the lace distinctly, when he answered smartly, "That is my manner, that is my manner!" At this the gentleman felt himself rather hurt; self-love placing his own foppish ideas above the rules of art.

It was a remark of his, that the characteristic property of robes of dignity in every country, is to be voluminous and encumber the persons they adorn, rendering them incapable of much action; thence indicating or implying that such personages are only to command their inferiors to perform what power or genius prompts. Thus the Chinese of exalted rank in addition to ample robes, shew also by the long nails on their fingers, that their hands are totally unfit for work of any kind, or even of being useful to themselves; a proof that they keep others to serve them.

It was the opinion of Sir Joshua Reynolds, that Michael Angelo was superior to the ancients, as he once declared to me; and on my not according with him in that opinion, I remember he said, “You have the strongest party in the argument, because you have the world on your side.” But at this time I am more inclined to think with him, at least thus far, that in the works of Michael Angelo there always appears to be an exquisite sentiment produced; but from the antique, nothing of that which he inspires. The antique gives us, undoubtedly, a more perfect example of just proportions, and of characters. I apprehend the same qualities run through all their works of every species: their dramas seem to be the works of men of most powerful heads, and therefore the most proper models for the schools, as, in them, nothing that is wrong can be found; and we may therefore assist our judgment, by the help of their examples, as infallible guides, which examples can be reduced to rules. But the feelings of the heart admit of but little assistance or improvement from fixed rules. Thus, he who may have settled his notions of perfection from the models of the ancient dramas, and supposes nothing can surpass them in any quality whatever, must be struck with astonishment and admiration, when, for the first time, he contemplates the pages of Shakspeare, where such various sensations, subtle and refined, are described. Yet Shakspeare cannot,

like the ancients, be admitted as a model for the schools, in as much as he is irregular and licentious, and his excellencies, like all those of genius, cannot be taught to others.

It must have been in this view that Sir Joshua saw a superiority in Michael Angelo over the antique; as surely he could not think him equal to them in just proportion, or in the decision and propriety of character.*

Some attempts may be discovered in his practice to imitate Michael Angelo; and more to imitate Corregio; but it is evident, that his whole life was devoted to his finding out the Venetian mode of colouring; in the pursuit of which he risked both his fame and his fortune.

The regard of Reynolds for Michael Angelo, has already been stated: another artist, of whom he always spoke with high respect, was Nicholas Poussin, although that painter was the very reverse to him in his practice; and I remember being in company with Sir Joshua and Sir William

* I must in this place take the opportunity to correct a mistake, that Jonathan Richardson has made, in attributing to Michael Angelo the basso relievo of the death of Count Ugolino and his family; as poetically represented by Dante.

It was the work of Pietro da Vinci, a cast in bronze designed and executed by himself; and is most minutely described by Vassari, in the life of that promising young sculptor, who died at an early period of his life, not having fully completed the twenty-third year of his age. He was the nephew of the eminent Leonardo da Vinci.

Chambers, one evening, when we had an argument on Poussin's merits. I expressed my surprize to find him so highly extol the excellencies of an artist that he was so totally unlike in his own practice, insomuch as to be absolutely the reverse, and added some opinions of my own, rather harsh, against the works of Poussin, to which Sir Joshua would not agree; when Sir William Chambers smiled, and said I brought to his recollection the officious character which is always introduced to act a part when a saint is to be made by the Romish church. The office of this personage, who is supposed to be sent there purposely by the devil, and is therefore called the devil's advocate, is to seize every possible objection against the sanctity of the holy character that is to be canonized. He is of course to be confuted in all his arguments, to the greater glory of the new saint.

— But in vindication of my sentiments in respect to Poussin, I shall here quote the authority of Mengs, as his opinion on this question precisely coincides with my own, as far as it goes. He says, “ Among the many who came to Rome, (meaning painters,) Nicholas Poussin was he who proposed to imitate entirely the style of the ancients; and if the customs of his age had not impeded him, he would have obtained his end. Painting always in oil small pieces, took from him the opportunity of enlarging his style, or of executing works of so much study as those of the first men of Italy.

Considering, however, his *works only as sketches*, they are excellent.”

Claude Lorraine also appears to have been a particular favourite painter in the estimation of Sir Joshua; as I have heard him say, that, in his opinion, the superiority of Claude in landscape was so pre-eminently excellent, that we might sooner expect to see another Raffaele than another Claude Lorraine.

Yet as to the figures which he so frequently introduced into his pictures, those Sir Joshua did not approve of; but said, that Claude in the attempt seemed, by his work, not to know what he was about.

This being nearly the close of Sir Joshua's *professional* life, I may remark, that, for some years, his price had been fifty guineas for a head portrait, the other sizes being in proportion. On this subject, a friend observed to him, that it certainly seemed to be a great demand; but that when it was taken into consideration how many pictures were left upon his hands, and never paid for, it would not amount to more, perhaps, than ten guineas for each, individually, which was too small a price. To this Sir Joshua smilingly replied, that he thought “ten guineas for each was a very reasonable profit.”

I recollect a circumstance of a certain lady who came to Sir Joshua to have her portrait painted by

him, a short time before he raised his price to its final extent; but on her asking his demand, and being informed that it was forty guineas for the half length, she started, saying that she did not apprehend his terms to be so high, adding, that she must take some time to consider upon it. Shortly after, this lady paid Sir Joshua another visit, and informed him, that she had now made up her mind, and was come to a resolution to comply with his proposed terms; when he acquainted her with his price being raised; and, of course, that what would have been forty, was now sixty guineas. Thus, doubly mortified, the lady saw there was no alternative; and she frankly owned, that she would have her portrait drawn by him at any price; and accordingly sat for it.

1791.

ÆTAT. 67.

ON the tenth of December, of the last year, Mr. Henry Howard gained the gold prize medal at the Royal Academy, for the best historical picture, and in the spring following set out for Italy, in order to compleat his studies in that school of arts. When Sir Joshua obligingly gave him the following letter of introduction to Lord Hervey then at Florence.

“ TO THE RIGHT HON. LORD HERVEY
AT FLORENCE.

London, March 19, 1791.

“ MY LORD,

THOUGH I have not the honour of being known to your lordship, yet I trust I shall be excused in the liberty I take of recommending to your lordship's patronage and protection the bearer of this—Mr. Howard, a young painter who is on his way to Rome. He gained the first prize of our Academy in December last, and I had the pleasure of telling him, when I delivered the gold medal, that it was the opinion of the academicians that his picture was the best that had been presented to the academy ever since its establishment.

“ To such merit I rest assured that an introduction alone is sufficient to procure your lordship's favour.

“ I am with the greatest respect,

“ Your Lordship's

“ Most humble and most obedient servant,

“ JOSHUA REYNOLDS.”

Though now contemplating a secession from public life, Sir Joshua did not feel any decrease in his love for the *art*, or in his good wishes for the *profession*, sentiments strikingly evinced by his general conduct at all times, and particularly so in the year 1791.

He had, during the course of his professional labours, procured a very large and valuable collection of paintings, the works of the old masters; and his assemblage of prints was highly valuable and interesting. So great, indeed, was his desire to render his collection a good one, that, as Mr. Dayes very accurately states, he offered to cover twice with guineas, as the price of purchase, the picture of the "Witch coming from Hell with a lapful of Charms," by *Teniers*; but this was refused. Yet it is pleasing to record, that he afterwards possessed this very picture; and, as he modestly declared, by *only* painting a portrait, a fancy subject, and giving another of his own works, already executed. The sum which he offered would have amounted to near one thousand guineas!

In this collection he had what he thought to be an oil painting of his favorite, Michael Angelo—a Madona and Child. But this involves a question which no one can determine; for if it was by Michael Angelo it would be invaluable indeed, not so much from its intrinsic merit, as from the extreme rarity of oil paintings from the pencil of that artist, and of which there are, in fact, very few in existence; for *oil-painting*, he used to say, "was employment only fit for women and children!"*

* Sir Joshua had also a *Study* by the same master.

Upon the whole, Sir Joshua's professed admiration of him was so great, that Angelo's head was engraved on his seal; and he also introduced his bust in that portrait which he painted of himself for the Royal Academy, and has marked the name of Michael Angelo on the paper held in the hand of his portrait, now in the Gallery at Florence.

So anxious was Sir Joshua Reynolds for the diffusion of a good taste in the art, and that future students might find a practical commentary on those precepts which he had now ceased to deliver, that he, in the most liberal manner, offered to the Academy this collection of paintings at a very low price, on the condition that they would purchase the Lyceum in the Strand for the purpose of constructing an exhibition room. This generous offer, however, for several reasons, was declined; yet this must still be a subject of regret when we consider the various testimonies which Sir Joshua has left, to the merit of the great masters, and the necessity of often referring to them; and whilst so many well selected works were in this collection. In one place he exclaims, "On whom then can the student rely, or who shall shew him the path that leads to excellence? The answer is obvious: those great masters, who have travelled the same road with success, are the most likely to conduct others. The works of those, who have stood the test of ages, have a claim to that respect and veneration to which no mortal can pretend. The

duration and stability of their fame are sufficient to evince that it has not been suspended upon the slender thread of fashion and caprice, but bound to the human heart by every tie of sympathetic approbation." He follows this up by adding, that "Our minds should be habituated to the contemplation of excellence, and, far from being contented to make such habits the discipline of our youth only, we should, to the last moment of our lives, continue a settled intercourse with all the true examples of grandeur. Their inventions are not only the food of our infancy, but the substance which supplies the fullest maturity of our vigour."

His often repeated advice then was,—“ Study, therefore, the great works of the great masters for ever. Study, as nearly as you can, in the order, in the manner, on the principles, on which they studied. Study nature attentively, but always with those masters in your company; consider them as models which you are to imitate, and at the same time as rivals which you are to combat.”

Some further opinions of Sir Joshua may be drawn from the reverend Mr. Gilpin's *Essays on Picturesque Beauty*, (page 34,) who says, “ As the subject of the foregoing Essay is rather new, and I doubted whether sufficiently founded in truth, I was desirous, before I printed it, that it should receive the imprimatur of Sir Joshua Reynolds, I begged him therefore to look it over, and received the following answer.”

London, April 19, 1791.

“ DEAR SIR,

“ Though I read now but little, yet I have read with great attention the Essay, which you were so good as to put into my hands, on the difference between the beautiful and the picturesque; and I may truly say I have received from it much pleasure and improvement.

“ Without opposing any of your sentiments, it has suggested an idea that may be worth consideration, whether the epithet picturesque is not applicable to the excellence of the inferior schools rather than to the higher. The works of Michael Angelo, Raphael, &c. appear to me to have nothing of it; whereas Rubens, and the Venetian painters may almost be said to have nothing else.

“ Perhaps Picturesque is somewhat synonymous to the word Taste, which we should think improperly applied to Homer or to Milton, but very well to Pope or Prior. I suspect that the application of these words is to excellencies of an inferior order, and which are incompatible with the grand style.

“ You are certainly right in saying, that variety in tints and forms is Picturesque; but it must be remembered, on the other hand, that the reverse of this (uniformity of colour, and a long continuation of lines,) produces grandeur.

“ I had an intention of pointing out the passages that particularly struck me; but I was afraid to use my eyes so much.

“The Essay has lain upon my table; and I think no day has passed without my looking at it, reading a little at a time.

“Whatever objections presented themselves at first view were done away on a closer inspection; and I am not quite sure but that is the case in regard to the observation which I have ventured to make on the word Picturesque. “I am, &c.

“JOSHUA REYNOLDS.”

Failing in his attempt to establish a gallery for his pictures, Sir Joshua in this year, (1791,) determined to make a temporary exhibition of them; and this took place in the month of April, at an apartment in the Haymarket, which had formerly been that of Ford the auctioneer. To this, the price of admission was one shilling; and as the profits arising from the exhibition were generously given by him to his old servant, Ralph Kirkley, so in the catalogue it was designated as, “Ralph’s Exhibition,” and some notice taken of it by a wicked wit, who, at the time, wished to insinuate that Sir Joshua was a partaker in the profits. But this was not the truth; neither do I believe there were any profits to share; however, these lines from Hudibras were inserted in a morning paper, together with some observations on the exhibition of pictures collected by the knight—

A 'Squire he had whose name was Ralph,
Who in the adventure went his half.”

Thus gaily making a sacrifice of truth to a joke.

The catalogue to Ralph's Exhibition was written by Sir Joshua himself, in which some of the particular pictures are well described, and it contains a few remarks useful to painters; as for instance—

“ No. 12. *Ludo. Carracci*.—A study of a head from the life, for a picture of St. Antonio, which is in the church of —, in Bologna. In the finished picture, all the more minute parts which are here expressed are there omitted; the light part is one broad mass, and the scanty lock of hair which falls on the forehead, is there much fuller and larger. A copy of this picture seen at the same time with this study would be a good lesson to students, by shewing the different manner of painting a portrait and an historical head; and teach them at the same time the advantage of always having recourse to nature. No. 82. *Bassan—Sheep-Shearing*.—At some distance, on a hill, with some difficulty, is seen the sacrifice of Isaac. This is a curious instance how little that school considered the art beyond colouring, and a representation of common nature; the sacrifice is here made secondary to the common occupations of husbandmen.”

I insert his description of those two pictures of his collection, as sufficient to shew that Sir Joshua could not even barely describe a picture without its being in some degree a useful lesson.

My own observations, and those of others, respecting Reynolds's merits and practice, have

been so diffusely noticed through these memoirs, that little is left for further remark, except to observe, that he rarely made any drawings, and the very few which he did produce cannot claim notice but from their very great scarcity, and for being the work of so distinguished an artist. As to his Academy figures, it would be very difficult to collect a dozen specimens all together, and those few would be found to be poor and feeble.

When he found it necessary to make any sketches for his pictures, he always executed them in oil colours, in a very slight manner, merely to determine the general effect; but of those there are very few to be met with.

Of all the portrait painters who have hitherto flourished, there has been no one whose works were so well suited to that mode of engraving named mezzotinto as those of Reynolds; and a very large collection they make. A catalogue of them was arranged in the year 1794 by William Richardson, which formed a list of seven hundred prints, some of which are duplicates.

The prints from his works, which are chiefly in mezzotinto, certainly form the most numerous collection of portraits that have ever been engraved after the works of one artist.

I have heard Sir Joshua say he believed he had covered more canvass than any painter that had gone before him: however, I much doubt this, as Rubens and Vandyke, in this particular, seem to

be entitled to the palm : but certain it is, that he has painted two generations of the beauties of England, and in a few instances three.

Still it may be observed, that his application to his beloved art was such, that he seldom went out of his house in the day time ; and if by accident any circumstance obliged him to walk in the streets at such hours, it seemed so strange to him, that, according to his own expression, he felt as if every body was looking at him.

If it were necessary to add any thing further on the merits of his discourses, which, unlike his paintings, were by some supposed not to be all his own, it may be found in part of an unfinished sketch for a discourse which he had it in contemplation to compose, as has been before observed, and where he with great humility describes the kind of assistance which he supposed he had received from Dr. Johnson. But a man of genius is perpetually receiving assistance (if so we please to call it,) from every thing he hears or sees.

“ I remember,” he says, “ Mr. Burke, speaking of the Essays of Sir Francis Bacon, said, he thought them the best of his works. Dr. Johnson was of opinion ‘ that their excellence and their value consisted in being the observations of a strong mind operating upon life ; and in consequence you find there what you seldom find in other books.’—It is this kind of excellence,” he adds, which gives a value to the performances of artists

also. It is the thoughts expressed in the works of Michael Angelo, Corregio, Raffaele, Parmegiano, and perhaps some of the old Gothic masters, and not the inventions of Pietro de Cortona, Carlo Maratti, Luca Giordano, and others that I might mention, which we seek after with avidity. From the former we learn to think originally. May I presume to introduce myself on this occasion, and even to mention as an instance of the truth of what I have remarked, the very Discourses which I have had the honour of delivering from this place. Whatever merit they may have must be imputed, in a great measure, to the education which I may be said to have had under Dr. Johnson. I do not mean to say, though it certainly would be to the credit of these Discourses, if I could say it with truth, that he contributed even a single sentiment to them; but he qualified my mind to think justly."

A few persons dining at Sir Joshua Reynolds's about this time, of whom I was one, in the course of conversation after dinner Sir Joshua spoke of Mr. Malone's edition of Shakspeare, which was then just about to be published. He said it was such a work as would render it totally unnecessary to attempt to improve it any further, as Mr. Malone had, with indefatigable industry and the deepest research, now explored every source of knowledge from which Shakspeare might have had any means of getting assistance, for in truth

it had been the prime object of his pursuits, and the business of his whole life with intense application.

I must confess that I felt a little degree of irritation at hearing this vast eulogium on a work which, in its very nature, cannot be a matter requiring the least genius; neither can it add one atom to the matchless excellencies of that captivating poet. and does little more than to form an excuse for the name of the commentator being handed down to posterity attached to that of the immortal Shakspeare.

I rather hastily replied, as a counteraction to the foregoing speech of Sir Joshua's, "What a very despicable creature must that man be who thus devotes himself and makes another man his God;" when Boswell, who sat at my elbow, and was not in my thoughts at the time, cried out immediately, "Oh! Sir Joshua, then that is me!" I was exceedingly sorry when he took it to himself, and excused the speech I had made in the best manner I was able. However, if Boswell's office was not a high one, the work he has produced by it is much more original and more valuable beyond all comparison, as very few books in the English language bid fairer for immortality than his life of Dr. Johnson.

Hitherto, Sir Joshua's personal health had not forsook him; and indeed, Mr. Malone states that in September of this year, he was in such health and spirits, that on returning to London from

Gregories in Buckinghamshire, the seat of their mutual friend Edmund Burke, he and Sir Joshua left his carriage at the Inn at Hayes, and walked five miles on the road in a warm day, without his complaining of any fatigue. "He had at that time, though above sixty-eight years of age, the appearance of a man not much beyond fifty, and seemed as likely to live ten or fifteen years, as any of his younger friends."

In October, unhappily, his spirits became much depressed; as he then entertained strong apprehensions respecting a tumour which had been for some time collecting over his left eye. This was now accompanied by a considerable degree of inflammation, which rendered him fearful that his right eye might also be affected, and the surgeons adopted every means in their power to *discuss* it, but without effect; for it was afterwards discovered to consist merely of extravasated blood, and had no connection with the optic nerve.

He was so impressed, however, with a knowledge of his own state of health, that he now determined to retire from the situation of President; and accordingly he addressed a letter to the Academy, "intimating his intention to resign the office on account of bodily infirmities, which disabled him from executing the duties of it to his own satisfaction."

This was dated on the 10th of November; and on the 15th, a meeting of all the academicians being called for the election of associates to that

body, Mr. West, the present President, laid the letter before them, which was received with the most respectful concern by his long tried companions, to whom his talents and virtues were so well known.

It was now proposed to embody a resolution whose purport should be that a deputation should wait on Sir Joshua to express their regret at this determination, and their wish that he might still retain the office, but appoint a deputy to execute its more laborious duties. This office was bestowed on, and accepted by, Mr. West, as a temporary arrangement; but Sir Joshua was never able afterwards to resume any of his functions; for as Mr. Malone observes, “ he laboured under a much more dangerous disease, (than that connected with the state of his eyes,) which deprived him of his wonted spirits and his appetite, though he was wholly unable to explain to his physicians the nature or seat of his disorder.”

1792.

ÆTAT. 68.

During the course of Sir Joshua's active life, he had passed his days in a state of professional honour and social enjoyment, that has scarcely been equalled, and never surpassed by any of his predecessors in art. He had been blessed also with

an excellent constitution by nature. Of these advantages he was very sensible, and I well remember a remark he once made to me, saying, "I have been fortunate in an uninterrupted share of good health and success for thirty years of my life: therefore, whatever ills may attend on the remainder of my days, I shall have no right to complain."

But infirmities, more than age, seemed to rush upon him in the decline of life, and were naturally embittered by the sudden contrast. He had from the beginning of his malady a fixed apprehension that it would end fatally to him; yet death was slow in its approach, which he surveyed with the fortitude of a philosopher, and the piety of a christian. His conduct to his physicians was submissive and accommodating, even where his own consciousness of the inevitable termination of his disease taught him to believe that exterior symptoms, which excited hope in his friends, were deceptive. He saw his intimate acquaintances daily, and conversed with them cheerfully, without ever once concealing from them the consequence that he foreknew, till within a very short time of the period of his existence, which he waited for with an equanimity rarely evinced by any mortal.

When a friend attempted to give him comfort in the hope of returning health, he calmly answered, "I know that all things on earth must have an end, and now I am come to mine."

It was not more than a fortnight before his death, when it was discovered that his disorder was occasioned by a diseased liver, which had confined him three painful months to his bed.

Thus, not having completed his sixty-ninth year, he was taken from the world which admired him, and the country which he adorned, on Thursday evening, February the 23d, 1792. His friends had for some considerable time conceived that he was low spirited, without material cause; but on his body being opened by Mr. Hunter, a preternatural enlargement of the liver, to more than double the usual size, sufficiently accounted for his depression and his death.

Thus have I humbly attempted to trace the rise, and progress to the final dissolution, of Sir Joshua Reynolds, the nation's ornament, and the favourite of an approving world, taken from it when in the height of his professional honours, and in the full possession of an established fame—an artist and a man, of whom scarce any praise can be too high.

To sum up his character in brief I shall here insert the eulogium of Burke, written on the impulse of the moment, and which is alike creditable to the memory of departed genius, and to the ready talent of the surviving friend.

“ *Last night*, in the sixty-ninth year of his age, died, at his house in Leicester-fields, Sir Joshua Reynolds. His illness was long, but borne with a mild and cheerful fortitude, without the least

mixture of any thing irritable or querulous ; agreeably to the placid and even tenour of his whole life. He had, from the beginning of his malady, a distinct view of his dissolution ; and he contemplated it with that entire composure, which nothing but the innocence, integrity, and usefulness of his life, and an unaffected submission to the will of Providence, could bestow. In this situation he had every consolation from family tenderness, which his own kindness had, indeed, well deserved.

“ Sir Joshua Reynolds was, on very many accounts, one of the most memorable men of his time. He was the first Englishman who added the praise of the elegant arts to the other glories of his country. In taste, in grace, in facility, in happy invention, and in the richness and harmony of colouring, he was equal to the greatest masters of the renowned ages. In portrait he went beyond them ; for he communicated to that description of the art, in which English artists are the most engaged, a variety, a fancy, and a dignity, derived from the higher branches, which even those who professed them in a superior manner, did not always preserve, when they delineated individual nature. His portraits remind the spectator of the invention of history, and the amenity of landscape. In painting portraits, he appeared not to be raised upon that platform, but to descend upon it from a higher sphere. His paintings illustrate his lessons, and his lessons seem to be derived from his paintings.

“ He possessed the theory as perfectly as the practice of his art. To be such a painter, he was a profound and penetrating philosopher.

“ In full affluence of foreign and domestic fame, admired by the expert in art, and by the learned in science, courted by the great, caressed by Sovereign powers, and celebrated by distinguished poets, his native humility, modesty, and candour, never forsook him even on surprize or provocation ; nor was the least degree of arrogance or assumption visible to the most scrutinizing eye in any part of his conduct or discourse.

“ His talents of every kind, powerful from nature, and not meanly cultivated by letters, his social virtues in all the relations and all the habits of life, rendered him the centre of a very great and unparalleled variety of agreeable societies, which will be dissipated by his death. He had too much merit not to excite some jealousy, too much innocence to provoke any enmity. The loss of no man of his time can be felt with more sincere, general, and unmixed sorrow.

“ HAIL ! AND FAREWELL ! ”

All the periodical journals of the time teemed with eulogies on the character of this eminent man ; but they are too numerous to insert here, although several of them were extremely well written : but of this of Burke's, it was said by a

contemporary journalist, that it was the eulogium of *Apelles* pronounced by *Pericles*, and that to attempt to add to it, would be to risk the same censure that would be passed upon an inferior artist who should presume to retouch one of Sir Joshua's own pictures.

What now remains to be detailed, is the account of his funeral; and I shall, in this, avail myself partly of copying some particulars of that solemn ceremony as they were drawn up for the public prints, by the pens, it is said, of Messrs. Burke and Malone in conjunction—a very just statement given with simplicity and feeling, and worthy of its subject.

It may be necessary to premise, that Mr. Burke applied by letter to the Council of the Royal Academy, soon after Sir Joshua's decease, requesting that the apartment allotted to the exhibition, might then be prepared in the usual forms of solemnity, in order that the body might lie there in state previous to interment, so that the last sad tribute to his memory might take place from that spot so often embellished by the effusions of his magic pencil.

The Academy felt the requisition too forcibly not to consent immediately, with one solitary exception; however, this opposition was sufficiently powerful to hold its ground against all the united voices, until silenced by an express order from the *Royal Patron* that every possible honour should

be paid to the memory of their venerable President.

Therefore, acting under this express order of his Majesty, a condescension highly honourable to the memory of Sir Joshua Reynolds, and exceedingly gratifying to the wishes of that Society of eminent Artists—every thing being finally arranged, the corpse, in a coffin covered with black velvet, was removed from Leicester-fields to Somerset-house on the night of Friday, the 2nd of March, where it lay in state that night, and until the beginning of the funeral procession, in the Model-room of the Academy which was hung with black cloth and lighted by chandeliers, whilst an escutcheon of arms was emblazoned at the head of the room ; the hour of noon on the following day being appointed for the performance of the obsequies.

On Saturday, the 3rd of March, 1792, the expectation of this solemnity had filled all the streets, through which the procession was to pass, with people innumerable of all ranks, as well as the windows of every house ; but the passage of all carriages, except those which were to form the procession, was strictly prevented by peace officers stationed for that purpose, and all the shops in the line of procession were closely shut up.

Independent of those who, according to the arrangement, were to form the funeral cavalcade, the greatest part of the most distinguished individuals in the kingdom had assembled at Somerset-house,

anxious to pay the last melancholy duties to him whom they had been accustomed to love for his virtues, and to respect for his talents; and many more were prevented by illness or by unexpected and unavoidable necessity, from paying this mark of respect, to their great regret.

The persons, who attended the funeral, assembled in the Council-chamber and Library of the Royal Academy, and the Academicians in the great Exhibition-room; and as many others as could be admitted with propriety into the procession, were permitted to join it. Though the company were very select, yet so extended was the line of carriages, that the procession required nearly two hours to move from Somerset-house to St. Paul's: and the last carriage had only set off from the former place just as the City Marshals, who led the procession, had arrived at the doors of the Cathedral.

The order of the procession was arranged as follows:

Twelve peace officers to clear the way.

Two City Marshals on horseback.

Lord Mayor's Carriage.

Two Sheriffs of London.

The Undertaker and ten Conductors on horseback.

A Lid with plumes of feathers.

The *Hearse* with six horses.

Ten Pall-bearers, viz.

Duke of Dorset, Lord High Steward of His Majesty's Household,

Duke of Leeds, Duke of Portland,

Marquis Townshend, Marquis of Abercorn,

Earl of Carlisle, Earl of Inchiquin,

Earl of Upper Ossory, Lord Viscount Palmerston,

Lord Eliot.

Robert Lovel Gwatkin, Esq. Chief Mourner.

Two Attendants of the family, one of them Mr. Marchi.

Right Honourable Edmund Burke.

Edmond Malone, Esq.

Philip Metcalfe, Esq.

} Executors.

The Council of the Royal Academy.

The Keeper. The Treasurer.

The Secretary. The Librarian.

Professors.

Mr. T. Sandby, Mr. Barry,

Bennet Langton, Esq. James Boswell, Esq.

(In Ancient Literature.)

(Secretary for Foreign Correspondence.)

Academicians, two and two.

Associates, two and two.

Artists, not Members of the Royal Academy.

Students.

After these there followed, the Archbishop of York, Marquis of Buckingham, Earls of Fife and Carysfort, Bishop of London, Lords St. Asaph, Fortescue, Somers, and Lucan, the Dean of Norwich, Right Honourable William Windham, Sirs

Abraham Hume, George Beaumont, Thomas Dundas, Charles Bunbury, and William Forbes, Barts. Drs. George Fordyce, Ash, Brocklesby, and Blagden ; also the following Members of Parliament, Sir William Scott, George Rose, John Rolle, William Weddell, Reginald Pole Carew, Matthew Montague, Richard P. Knight, Dudley North, and John Cleveland, Esquires ; to whom we may add other gentlemen, viz. Richard Clark, Charles Townley, Abel Moysey, Welbore Ellis Agar, William Seward, Edward Jertingham, Richard Burke, Thomas Coutts, J. J. Angerstein, Edward Gwatkin, Charles Burney, John Hunter, William Cruikshank, and John Devaynes, Esqrs. together with Colonel Gwynn, Captain Pole, Mr. Kemble, Dr. Lawrence, Mr. Alderman Boydell, Messrs. Poggi, Breda, &c. &c. &c.

This company was conveyed in forty-two mourning coaches, whilst forty-nine coaches belonging to the nobility and gentry, followed the procession.

The statement of which I have spoken, goes on to detail that at half past three o'clock was interred the body of " Sir Joshua Reynolds, Knt. Doctor of Laws in the Universities of Oxford and Dublin, Principal Painter to his Majesty, President of the Royal Academy of Painting, Sculpture, and Architecture, of London, Fellow of the Royal Society, Fellow of the Society of Antiquaries, and Member of the Imperial Academy at Florence."

The spot selected for the grave was in the crypt underneath the body of the Cathedral, next to that of Dr. Newton, late Bishop of Bristol, “and close by the tomb of the famous Sir Christopher Wren, the architect of that edifice.”

On this solemn occasion it was still some consolation to reflect, that the company who attended it consisted of a great number of the most distinguished persons, who were emulous in their desire of paying the last honours to the remains of him whose life had been employed in the exertions of the highest talents, and in the exercise of those virtues that make a man respectable and beloved.

Never was a public solemnity conducted with more decorum and dignity. The procession set out at half an hour after twelve o'clock. The hearse arrived at the great western gate of St. Paul's about a quarter after two, and was there met by the Dignitaries of the church, and by the gentlemen of the choir, who chaunted the proper Psalms, while the procession moved to the entrance of the choir, where was performed, in a more than usual solemn manner, the full choir evening service, together with the famous anthem of Dr. Boyce; the body remaining during the whole time in the centre of the choir. The chief mourner and gentlemen of the Academy, having long cloaks of black, as of the family, were placed by the body; the chief mourner in a chair at the

head; the two attendants at the feet; the Pallbearers and Executors in the seats on the decanel side; the other noblemen and gentlemen on the cantorial side. The Bishop of London was in his proper place, as were the Lord Mayor and Sheriffs.

“ After the service, the body was conveyed into the crypt, and placed immediately beneath the perforated brass plate, under the centre of the dome. Dr. Jefferies, Canon Residentiary, with the other Canons, and the whole choir, came under the dome; the grave digger attending in the middle with a shovel of mould, which at the proper time was thrown through the aperture of the plate, on the coffin. The funeral service was chaunted, and accompanied on the organ in a grand and affecting manner. When the funeral service was ended, the Chief Mourner and Executors went into the crypt, and attended the corpse to the grave, which was dug under the pavement.

“ The Lord Mayor and Sheriffs honoured the procession by coming to Somerset Place, where an officer’s guard of thirty men was placed at the great court-gate. After the procession had passed through Temple Bar, the gates were shut by order of the Lord Mayor, to prevent any interruption from carriages passing to or from the city.”

After the ceremony, the Procession returned in nearly the same order to the Royal Academy; and I may here mention, that it contained as many members, of the “**Literary Club,**” as were not



prevented by personal duties from attending it. It has also been noticed, as worthy of record, that in the procession were three Knights of the Garter, two of St. Patrick, and one of the Thistle, three Dukes, and four noblemen who had held the high office of Viceroy of Ireland.

A cold collation having been prepared for the members of the Royal Academy, on their return to Somerset Place, Mr. Burke entered the room to return the thanks of the family for the attention shewn to the remains of their lamented President; but his feelings were too acute to permit him to utter the sentiments he wished to express.

“ Thus,” says a recent panegyrist, “ thus were deposited the remains of Sir Joshua Reynolds, doubly hallowed by a nation’s respect, and by the tears of private friendship—and thus ends all that is earthly and perishable of him whose fame as an artist, as a patronizer of the arts, and above all, as a good man, will long survive him !”

As a token of respect and a pledge of remembrance, a print engraved by Bartolozzi, was presented to each of the gentlemen who had joined the procession.

It represented a female clasping an urn, a funeral emblem of a weeping muse, (from the pencil of Burney) and on the monument are a pallet, pencils, and a resting stick. The Genius of Painting is also introduced, holding an inverted and ex-

tinguished torch, and pointing to the monument, on which is written,

“ Sucedet fama, vivusque per ora feretur.”

Beneath is a complimentary address : and a fac simile of the whole will be found at the close of these Memoirs. The funeral expenses were in part defrayed out of the funds of the Royal Academy.

The last will and testament of Sir Joshua Reynolds had been written not very long previous to his decease, being dated on the 5th of November, 1791.

He had written it with his own hand, and its beginning was extremely expressive of his own feelings and sentiments on the subject, for he says,

“ As it is probable that I may shortly be deprived of sight, and may not have an opportunity of making a formal will, I desire that the following memorandums may be considered as my last will and testament.

“ I commend my soul to God, in humble hopes of his mercy, and my body to the earth.”——

All his property, real and personal, with the exceptions here recorded, he then bequeaths to his niece Miss Palmer, now Marchioness of Thomond, including his Richmond Villa, the house in Leicester-fields, together with all property in the public funds, pictures, books, furniture, plate, &c.

He then proceeds to specify his various legacies: viz., to Mrs. Gwatkins, £10,000 in the three per cents.; to his sister, Miss Frances Reynolds, £2,500 in the funds for life, with the reversion to Miss Palmer; to Mr. Burke, £2,000, with the cancelling of a bond of the same amount for money borrowed; to the Earl of Upper Ossory, the first choice, and to Lord Palmerstone the second choice of any picture of his own painting; to Sir Abraham Hume, Bart. the choice of his Claude Lorraines; to Sir George Beaumont, Bart. the "Return of the Ark," by Sebastian Bourdon; the sum of £200 each to his executors, and the same to Mr. Boswell, to be expended, if they thought proper, in the purchase of a picture, to be bought for each at the sale of his paintings, and to be kept for his sake; his miniature of Milton, to Mr. Mason; one of Oliver Cromwell, by the same artist, (Cooper) to Richard Burke, jun.; his watch and seals to his nephew, William Johnson, then at Calcutta; his picture of the angel Contemplation, which formed the upper part of the Nativity, to the Duke of Portland; * to Mrs. Bunbury, the portrait of her son; to Mrs. Gwyn, her own portrait, with a turban: £1,000 to his old and faith-

* It is said that he wished to have had this picture carried in the procession at his funeral, but it was not deemed prudent to comply with it, as it could not be ascertained in what manner a London populace might have received it.

ful servant, Ralph Kirkly, who had lived with him upwards of thirty years.*

This is the principal purport of his will, which was proved in Doctor's Commons on the 28th of February; and the whole amount of cash and funded property was, at least, £60,000, whilst the houses, pictures, &c. were valued at £20,000 more: a sum that fully proves the high estimation in which he had professionally been held, particularly when we consider the liberal and hospitable manner in which the greatest part of his life had been spent.

Completely to fill up the vacancy which the loss of such a man produced in society, was impossible; Dr. Douglas, Bishop of Salisbury, was selected to occupy his seat in the Literary Club; Sir T. Lawrence, appointed principal painter in ordinary to his Majesty; and Mr. West, the present President of the Royal Academy, was unanimously elected to fill the chair at Somerset-place, on the 24th of March; on which occasion he united a handsome tribute of praise towards his deceased friend and predecessor, with his expression of thanks for the honor conferred on him.

* It is to be remarked, that so little did Sir Joshua know of testamentary matters, or of the forms of law, that after having made his will, and in it bequeathed a legacy of One Thousand Pounds to his faithful servant, Mr. Ralph Kirkly, he made him sign it as one of the witnesses; this error was in good time discovered by Edm. Burke, and rectified accordingly.

On the death of Sir Joshua, even those whose little jealousies had contributed to give him some uneasiness whilst living, all stood forward to make amends by the warmest commendations ; amongst the rest was Mr. Barry, who now gave a full scope to his more generous feelings, and about a year afterwards, on the 18th of February, 1793, paid some very well deserved compliments to his friend in his sixth Lecture read at the Academy.*

This just tribute to the memory of Sir Joshua, was noticed by the Marquis and Marchioness of Thomond, who, in order to mark their approval, presented him with their inestimable relative's painting-room chair. I have preserved his answer, from its connection with the present itself, and its containing an appropriate compliment to the former lamented possessor. " Mr. Barry presents his most respectful compliments to Lord and Lady T. with every acknowledgment and thanks for their inestimable favour conferred on him this morning in the gift of Sir Joshua's chair.

" Alas ! this chair, that had such a glorious career of fortune, instrumental as it has been in giving the most advantageous stability to the otherwise fleeting, perishable graces of a Lady Sarah Bunbury, or a Waldegrave, or in perpetuating the negligent honest exterior of the authors of the Rambler, the Traveller, and almost

* See Barry's works, vol. i. pages 552 to 557.

every one to whom the public admiration gave a currency for abilities, beauty, rank, or fashion.

“The very chair that is immortalized in Mrs. Siddons’s Tragic Muse, where it will have as much celebrity as the chair of Pindar, which for so many ages was shewn in the porch at Olympia! This chair of Sir Joshua Reynolds may rest well satisfied with the reputation it has gained, and although its present possessor may not be enabled to grace it with any new ornament, yet it can surely count upon finding a most affectionate, reverential conservator, whilst God shall permit it to remain under his care.” January 30th, 1794.

The “*Noctes Cænæque Deum*,” (as Boswell calls them,) enjoyed at the table of Sir Joshua, were now no more. But, as Malone says, from experience, “will be long remembered by those who had the happiness to partake of them; but the remembrance must always be accompanied with regret, when it is considered, that the death of their amiable and illustrious host has left a chasm in society, and that no such common centre of union for the accomplished and the learned now exists, or is likely soon to exist, in London.”

Some time after the funeral, a copy of verses was addressed to the Royal Academicians, written by the beautiful Mrs. Robinson, which possess considerable merit, but are, however, too long for insertion; therefore, I shall make an extract of

those lines only which apply to the particular merits of Sir Joshua Reynolds.

“ Ye solemn mourners, who, with footsteps slow,
 Prolonged the sable line of public woe ;
 Who fondly crowding round his plumed bier,
 Gave to his worth, th’ involuntary tear ;
 Ye children of his school, who oft have hung
 On the grac’d precepts of his tuneful tongue ;
 Who many an hour in mute attention caught
 The vivid lustre of his polished thought !
 Ye who have felt, for ye have taste to feel,
 The magic influence o’er your senses steal,
 When eloquently chaste, from wisdom’s page
 He drew each model for a rising age !
 Say, is no kind, no grateful tribute due,
 To HIM who twin’d immortal wreaths for you ?
 Who from the dawn of youth to manhood’s prime
 Snatch’d hidden branches from the wings of time ;
 Who gave new lustre to your wond’ring sight,
 Drawn from the chaos of oblivious night ;
 Where chain’d by *Ignorance*, in *Envy’s* cave,
 The art he courted found a chilling grave ;
 Where native genius faded, unadmired,
 While emulation’s glorious flame expir’d,
 Till Reynolds, braving *Envy’s* recreant spell,
 Dragg’d the huge monster from her thorny cell,
 Who, shrinking from his mild benignant eye,
 Subdued, to Stygian darkness fled—to die.
 Beneath yon lofty dome that props the skies,
 Low ‘ on the lap of earth’ your patron lies ;
 Cold is the hand that gave the touch divine,
 Which bade the mimic orbs of reason shine :
 Closed is that eye which beam’d with living light,
 That gave the mental soul to mortal sight !
 For, by the matchless wonders of his art
 The outward mein bespoke the hidden heart !
 Taste, feeling, character, his pencil knew,
 And TRUTH acknowledged e’en what Fancy drew.

So just to nature ev'ry part combin'd,
 Each *feature* mark'd the tenor of the *mind* !
 'Twas his, with varying excellence to show
 Stern manhood's dignity and beauty's glow !
 To paint the perfect form, the witching face,
 With Guido's softness, and with Titian's grace !
 The dimpled cherub at the mother's breast,
 The smile serene, that spoke the parent blest !
 The POET's vivid thought, that shone divine
 Through the rich image of each finish'd line !
 The tale that bids the tear of pity flow ;
 The frenzied gaze of petrifying woe ;
 The dying father, fix'd in horror wild,
 O'er the shrunk image of his famish'd child.
 AH ! STAY MY MUSE—nor trace the madd'ning scene,
 Nor paint the starting eye, the frantic mien ;
 Turn from the picture of distracting woes ,
 Turn from each charm that beauty's smile bestows,
 Go form a wreath Time's temple to adorn,
 Bedeck'd with many a *rose*—with many a *thorn* !
 Go, bind the hero's brow with deathless bays ;
 Or, to calm friendship chaunt the note of praise ;
 Or, with a feather stol'n from Fancy's wing,
 Sweep with light hand the gay fantastic string ;
 But leave, oh, leave thy fond lamenting song,
 The feeble echo of a wond'ring throng—
 Can'st thou with brighter tints adorn the rose,
 Where nature's vivid blush divinely glows ?
 Say can'st thou add one ray to heaven's own light,
 Or give to Alpine snow a purer white ?
 Cans't thou increase the diamond's burning glow,
 Or to the flower a richer scent bestow ?
 Say cans't thou snatch, by sympathy sublime,
 One kindred bosom from the grasp of TIME ?
 Ah ! no ! then bend with cypress boughs thy lyre,
 Mute be its chords, and quench'd its sacred fire,
 For dimly gleam the poet's votive lays
 Midst the vast splendor of a NATION'S PRAISE."

To sum up the whole of Sir Joshua's character as a professional man, it may be observed that when we contemplate him as a painter, we are to recollect, that after the death of Kneller, the arts in England fell to the lowest state of barbarism, and each professor either followed that painter's steps, or else wandered in utter darkness, till Reynolds, like the sun, dispelled the mist, and threw an unprecedented splendor on the department of portraiture. Hence the English school is, in a great degree, the growth of his admirable example.

To the grandeur, the truth, and simplicity of Titian, and to the daring strength of Rembrandt, he has united the chasteness and delicacy of Vandyke. Delighted with the picturesque beauties of Rubens, he was the first that attempted a bright and gay back ground to portraits; and defying the dull and ignorant rules of his master, at a very early period of life, emancipated his art from the shackles with which it had been encumbered in the school of Hudson. There is, however, every reason to believe, that he very rarely copied an entire picture of any master,* though he certainly

* Of the very few copies he made at Rome the only finished one is St. Michael, the Archangel, chaining the dragon, after Guido. This copy he placed in the ceiling of his Picture Gallery, where it remained till his death. It was then taken down by his niece, and heiress, when she left that house.

He made a small copy of the School of Athens, from Raffaele; also about eight or ten heads selected from Raffaele in the Vatican, and a head or two from Titian.

did imitate the excellent parts of many ; and his versatility in this respect was equalled only by the susceptibility of his feelings, the quickness of his comprehension, and the ardor which prompted his efforts. His pictures in general possess a degree of merit superior to mere portraits ; they assume the rank of history. His portraits of men are distinguished by a certain air of dignity, and those of women and children by a grace, a beauty, and simplicity, which have seldom been equalled, and never surpassed. No painter ever gave so completely as himself, that momentary fascinating expression, that irresistible charm which accompanies and denotes “the Cynthia of the minute.” In his attempts to give character where it did not exist, he has sometimes lost likeness ; but the deficiencies of the portrait were often compensated by the beauty of the picture.

The attitudes of his figures are generally full of grace, ease, and propriety ; he could throw them into the boldest variations, and he often ventures on postures, which inferior painters could not execute ; or which, if attempted, would inevitably destroy their credit. His chief aim, however, was *colour* and *effect* ; and these he always varied as the subject required. Whatever deficiencies there may be in the design of this great master, no one at any period better understood the principles of colouring ; nor can it be doubted that he carried this branch of his art to a very high degree of ex-

cellence. His lights display the knowledge he possessed, and with shade he conceals his defects. Whether we consider the power, the brilliancy, or the form of his lights, the transparency of his shadows, with the just quantities of each, and the harmony, richness, and full effect of the whole, it is evident that he has not only far transcended every modern master, but that his excellencies in these captivating parts of painting, vie with the works of the great models he has emulated. The opinion he has given of Raffaele may, with equal justice, be applied to himself; "that his materials were generally borrowed, but the noble structure was his own." No one ever appropriated the ideas of others to his own purpose with more skill than Sir Joshua. He possessed the alchemy of painting, by converting whatever he touched into gold. Like the bee that extracts sweets from the most noxious flowers, so his active observation could see every thing pregnant with a means of improvement, from the wooden print on a common ballad, to the highest graces of Parmegiano. Perhaps there is no painter that ever went before him, from whom he has not derived some advantage, and appropriated certain excellencies with judicious selection and consummate taste. Yet after all that can be alledged against him as a borrower of forms from other masters, it must be allowed that he engrafted on them beauties peculiarly his own. The severest critics, indeed, must

admit that his manner is truly original, bold, and free. Freedom is certainly one of his principal characteristics ; and to this he seems often to have sacrificed every other consideration. He has, however, two manners ; his early pictures are without those violent freedoms of execution and dashes of the pencil, being more minute and more fearful, but the colouring is clear, natural, and good. In his latter and bolder works, the colour, though excellent, is sometimes more artificial than chaste.

As an *Historical painter*, he cannot be placed in the same rank which he holds in the line of portraiture. The compositions of his portraits are unquestionably excellent, whilst his historical pictures are, in this respect, often very defective. They frequently consist of borrowed parts, which are not always suited to each other. Though many times inaccurate, and deficient in the style of drawing, they must, however, be allowed to possess great breadth, taste, and feeling, and many of them fine expression. His light poetical pieces much excelled those of a narrative or historical character.

There is a circumstance contained in one of his fragments of an intended discourse, preserved by Mr. Malone, in which he says, “ It has frequently happened, as I was informed by the keeper of the Vatican, that many of those whom he had conducted through the various apartments of that

edifice, when about to be dismissed, have asked for the works of Raffaele, and would not believe that they had already passed through the rooms where they are preserved ; so little impression had those performances made on them. One of the first painters now in France once told me, that this circumstance happened to himself ; though he now looks on Raffaele with the veneration which he deserves from all painters and lovers of the art.

“ I remember very well my own disappointment, when I first visited the Vatican ; but on confessing my feelings to a brother student, of whose ingenuousness I had a high opinion, he acknowledged that the works of Raffaele had the same effect on him ; or, rather, that they did not produce the effect which he expected. This was a great relief to my mind ; and on inquiring further, of other students, I found that those persons only who, from natural imbecility, appeared to be incapable of ever relishing those divine performances, made pretensions to instantaneous raptures on first beholding them. In justice to myself, however, I must add, that though disappointed and mortified at not finding myself enraptured with the works of this great man, I did not for a moment conceive or suppose that the name of Raffaele, and those admirable paintings in particular, owed their reputation to the ignorance and prejudice of mankind ; on the contrary, my not relishing them, as I was conscious I ought to have done, was one of the

most humiliating circumstances that ever happened to me ; I found myself in the midst of works executed upon principles with which I was unacquainted : I felt my ignorance, and stood abashed. All the indigested notions of painting which I had brought with me from England, where the art was in the lowest state it had ever been in, (it could not, indeed, be lower,) were to be totally done away, and eradicated from my mind. It was necessary, as it is expressed on a very solemn occasion, that I should become as a *little child*. Notwithstanding my disappointment, I proceeded to copy some of those excellent works. I viewed them again and again ; I even affected to feel their merit ; and to admire them more than I really did.

“ In a short time a new taste and new perception began to dawn upon me ; and I was convinced that I had originally formed a false opinion of the perfection of art, and that this great painter was well entitled to the high rank which he holds in the estimation of the world. The truth is, that if these works had really been what I expected, they would have contained beauties superficial and alluring, but by no means such as would have entitled them to the great reputation which they have so long and so justly obtained.”

Considering the study and practice Reynolds must have gone through before he visited Italy, he certainly was, in comparison with others, a man of a cultivated taste ; and, though what has been

said may be very true, that many persons, after having been conducted through the rooms of the Vatican, have turned to the keeper and asked him for the paintings of Raffaele, yet it is not easy to conceive how he, who probably had seen the cartoons, and other pictures, besides prints from this great painter, should have formed such an inadequate and erroneous idea of what he was to see at Rome. Splendor of colour, depth of chiaro-scuro, he must have been taught not to expect ; strength and dignity of character, unexampled variety, and vivacity of expression, (qualities more striking to the eye of taste, and scarcely less so to the vulgar,) they certainly possess. To what, then, can be attributed their want of impression, particularly on such as him ? It does not appear that the same complaint has been made of the works of Michael Angelo.

That, which in his discourses he denominates the ornamental style, and which he treats in his writings with so much severity, seems to have been the very style which it was his constant endeavour to attain, and which it may be said he did attain in an unexampled degree ; while the excellencies of the grand style, its severe and majestic simplicity, he seems not to have been inclined to attempt, although so great an admirer of it, that even its defects are deemed beauties in his eyes ; whilst its dryness and hardness of manner,

and an inharmonious effect, frequently proceeding from a want of skill in the painter, he contemplates altogether with enthusiastic admiration. His theory and his practice are evidently at variance; he speaks of the cold painters of portraits, and ranks them on a level with the epigrammatist and sonneteer, yet devoted his life to portraits. How to account for this dereliction of his theory may be difficult; the reason given by himself was, that he adapted his style to the taste of the age in which he lived; and again, that a man does not always do what he would, but what he can.

My own opinion is, that his mind by nature was constituted more for the cultivation of that which belongs to the beautiful and the graceful, than of those qualities which compose the terrible or the sublime, and that the style of Michael Angelo which he seems to have lamented that he did not adopt in his youth, was not that style to which he could, with most advantage to himself, have devoted his studies; yet it must ever remain a doubt, whether he could or could not have succeeded in the highest style, if the opportunity had been offered to him. All that we can say of him is, that he has done full enough to prove that his genius was very great, as he is an example of the most perfect growth that English culture can produce; and from the means which he had, he has accomplished all that was required of him, and

availed himself of that patronage which is in the hands of an infinity of persons to bestow.*

But that great style, which he so properly had made his idol, and appeared to adore, a style which never can exist in its fullness but in countries where the religion, or the government, or both together, are its patrons—is an article totally useless and unfit in respect to the habits of private life, and in this country held as very disagreeable; and had Raffaele or Michael Angelo been born in England, they would, perhaps, have been far greater than Sir Joshua Reynolds, and most undoubtedly would have acquired great fame; but they would have been known only as illustrious portrait painters even to themselves, as they never would have been required to execute any other works.

The grand style is an instrument fit only to be in the hands of government, civil or religious, and only proper for solemn occasions. It is not to be the subject of vulgar criticism; it is to command,

* There is a singularity in the works of Sir Joshua not easily explained. Portrait painting was his chief employment—and in that department he ever gave an air of dignity or grace to the meanest subjects of his pencil. Yet, in his historical pictures, for which he might select his models and aggrandize his figures as he pleased, he frequently failed in giving them an ordinary portion of those qualities. This is exemplified in the ignoble representations of the wailike Warwick and Salisbury, and of the high-born Cardinal Beaufort, in the picture of the death of that prelate. Also his Madonnas are certainly wanting in dignity.

to guide, and to direct the heart, and such are the uses the church of Rome has made of it.

The lectures which he delivered at the Royal Academy on the 10th of December, at first every year, and latterly every two years, are the works which chiefly bestow on him the character of an estimable writer. In these he treats his favourite art with the depth of a philosopher, the accomplishments of a scholar, and the accuracy of a critic. These were designed to animate and direct the students in the pursuit of excellence, and indeed are replete with the soundest instructions, expressed in language at once natural, perspicuous, and correct.*

The profound knowledge of the art displayed in these discourses is enriched by the classical and appropriate illustrations of a polished mind; they are treasures of information to the student and to the proficient; and the elegance and chastity of the style have very rarely, if ever, been equalled by the most eminent of our writers. His observations on the old masters are equally just and ingenious; several branches of the theory of art

* “ Those who attentively read Sir Joshua Reynolds’s discourses, will be imperceptibly led into the school of excellence, where they will find delicacy, imagination, and a natural acuteness of judgment, arising from a long and intimate acquaintance with the best performances of every kind. These studies will enable an enquiring youth to form ideas with exactness and precision; and lay a foundation for discovering the peculiar character and manner of the different masters.” RAYS OF GENIUS.

are treated with uncommon judgement and ability, and the composition throughout is strongly marked by the simplicity of his own individual character and manner, and totally unlike that of any of his literary friends, to whom some idle critics have attributed the merit of those discourses. They have been translated into French; and the late Mr. Baretti published an edition of them in the Italian language.

It has been conjectured that Sir Joshua was not the author of the discourses which he delivered at the Royal Academy.

I can only say that at the periods when it was expected he should have composed them, I have heard him walking at intervals in his room as if in meditation, till one or two o'clock in the morning, and I have on the following morning, at an early hour, seen the papers on the subject of his art which had been written on the preceding night. I have had the rude manuscript from himself in his own hand writing, in order to make a fair copy from it for him, to read it in public; I have seen the manuscript also after it had been revised by Dr. Johnson, who has sometimes altered it to a wrong meaning, from his total ignorance of the subject and of art; but never to my knowledge saw the marks of Burke's pen on any of the manuscripts.

I remember one day in particular, after Sir Joshua had been studying the preceding night, Burke paid him a morning visit, and at that time

I was at work in the adjoining room, and could easily overhear their conversation, which, as Sir Joshua was deaf, was very distinct; and he read aloud to Burke the following paragraph of his discourse for December the 10th, 1774.

“ Like a sovereign judge and arbiter of art,” (alluding to the painter,) “ he is possessed of that presiding power which separates and attracts every excellence from every school; selects both from what is great and what is little, brings home knowledge from the east and from the west; making the universe tributary towards furnishing his mind and enriching his works with originality and variety of invention.”

Burke commended it in the highest terms saying, “ This is, indeed, excellent, nobody can mend it, no man could say it better.”

Yet, I must confess, it is wonderful, that a man, whose time was so entirely absorbed in the practical acquirements of his art, and who could not be ranked as a man eminent for literature, should compose such prose as good judges have pronounced to be amongst the highest examples in our language.

The Bishop of Rochester, who has examined the manuscripts of Mr. Burke since his death, and has lately edited a part of them, informed a friend that he could discover no reason to think that Mr. Burke had the least hand in the discourses of Reynolds: nor can I pay any attention to what Mr. Courtenay says in his “ Moral and Literary

Character of Dr. Johnson," where he seems to think that Reynolds copied from the latter, or imitated him.

"To Fame's proud cliff, he bade our Raffaele rise,
Hence Reynolds' pen with Reynolds' pencil vies."

Mr. M'Cormick also asserts, that Burke wrote his letter in 1790, when he retired from the chair; but I trust that there is sufficient evidence already adduced, to prove that those opinions are totally erroneous.

EXTRACT OF A LETTER FROM E. BURKE, TO MR.
MALONE.

"I have read over some part of the discourses with an unusual sort of pleasure; partly because, being faded a little in my memory, they have a sort of appearance of novelty; partly by reviving recollections mixed with melancholy and satisfaction. The Flemish Journal I had never seen before. You trace in that, every where, the spirit of the discourses, supported by new examples. He is always the same man; the same philosophical, the same artist-like critic, the same sagacious observer, with the same minuteness, without the smallest degree of trifling."

Before I quit the subject of these discourses of Sir Joshua, I cannot refrain from giving the opinion of the Chevalier Mengs on them, whether because he had not the capacity to comprehend them, or from the effect of envy I cannot deter-

mine, but this Mengs says, "That the book of the English Reynolds would lead youth into error, because it abandons them to superficial principles, the only ones known to that author."

This criticism from Mengs raised the choler of our English Poet, Cumberland, and he thus retorts the charge to the great annoyance of the Chevalier Don Joseph Nicholas D'Azara, Spanish minister at Rome, and the editor of Mengs's manuscripts, also his adorer.

"If the genius of Mengs," says Cumberland, "had been capable of producing a composition equal to that of the tragic and pathetic Ugolino, I am persuaded such a sentence as the above would never have passed his lips; but flattery made him vain, and sickness rendered him peevish: he found himself in Madrid, in a country without rivals, and because the Arts had travelled out of his sight, he was disposed to think they existed no where but on his own palette. The time perhaps is at hand when our virtuosi will extend their route to Spain, and of these some one probably will be found, who, regarding with just indignation the dogmatical decrees of Mengs, will take in hand the examination of his paintings, which I have enumerated; and we may then be told, with the authority of science, that his nativity though so splendidly encased, and covered with such care that the very winds of Heaven are not permitted to visit the face too roughly, would

have owed more to the chrystal than it does, in some parts at least, had it been less transparent than it is ; that it discovers an abortive and puisne Bambino, which seems copied from a bottle ; that Mengs was an artist who had seen much, and invented little ; that he dispenses neither life nor death to his figures ; excites no terror, rouses no passion, and risks no flights ; that by studying to avoid particular defects, he incurs general ones, and paints with tameness and servility ; that the contracted scale and idea of a painter of miniatures, as which he was brought up, is to be traced in all, or most of his compositions, in which a finished delicacy of the pencil exhibits the hand of the artist, but gives no emanations of the soul of the master ; if it is beauty it does not warm ; if it is sorrow it excites no pity : that, when the angel announces the salutation to Mary, it is a messenger that has neither used dispatch in the errand, nor grace in the delivery ; that although Rubens was by one of his oracular sayings condemned to the ignominious dullness of a Dutch translator, Mengs was as capable of painting Rubens's adoration, as he was of creating the star in the East that ushered the Magi : but these are questions above my capacity ; I resign Mengs to abler critics, and Reynolds to better defenders ; well contented that posterity should admire them both, and well assured that the fame of our countryman is established beyond the reach of envy and detraction."

I have given this long quotation from Cumberland, because in my apprehension it contains a true and candid estimate of the talents of Mengs, of him who treats the works of Rubens and of Reynolds with contempt. Cumberland thus adds, " Yet Mengs is the author whom courtly prejudice has put above comparison in Spain, whom not to admire is treason against the state, and whose worship is become canonical, a part almost of the orthodox idolatry of their religion."

We may be permitted to sum up our opinions of Reynolds' sentiments on art, and of his mode of expressing them, by an anecdote, told me by the late Mr. Opie, that a friend of his, a clergyman, declared to him, that he once delivered one of Sir Joshua's discourses, from the pulpit, as a sermon, with no other alteration but in such words as made it applicable to morals instead of the fine arts; which is a proof of the depth of his reasoning, and of its foundation being formed on the principles of general nature.

With respect to his character as a man, to say that Sir Joshua was without faults, would be to bestow on him that praise, to which no human being can have a claim; but when we consider the conspicuous situation in which he stood, it is surprizing to find that so few can be discovered in him: and certainly he possessed an equanimity of disposition very rarely to be met with in per-

sons whose pursuit is universal reputation, and who are attended and surrounded in their perilous journey by jealous competition. " His native humility, modesty, and candour never forsook him, even from surprize or provocation, nor was the least degree of arrogance or assumption visible to the most scrutinizing eye in any part of his conduct." He was not annoyed by that fluctuation of idea and inconstancy of temper which prevent many with equal desire for fame from resolving upon any particular plan, and dispose them to change it, even after they have made their election. He had none of those eccentric bursts of action, those fiery impetuosities which are supposed by the vulgar to characterize genius, and which frequently are found to accompany a secondary rank of talent, but are never conjoined with the first. His incessant industry was never wearied into despondency by miscarriage, nor elated into negligence by success. All nature and all art combined to form his academy. His mind was constantly awake, ever on the wing, comprehensive, vigorous, discriminating, and retentive. His powers of attention were never torpid. He had a strong turn and relish for humour in all its various forms, and very quickly saw the weak sides of things. Of the numerous characters which presented themselves to him in the mixed companies in which he lived, he was a nice and sagacious observer, as I have had frequent occasion to remark.

“ The Graces,” says—a certain author, “ after wandering to find a home, settled in the bosom of Addison.” I think such a compliment would be equally, if not more applicable to Sir Joshua ; for all he said or did was wholly unmixed with any of those inelegant coarsenesses which frequently stain the beauty of high exertions. There was a polish even in his exterior, illustrative of the gentleman and the scholar. His general manner, deportment, and behaviour, were amiable and prepossessing ; his disposition was naturally courtly. He always evinced a desire to pay a due respect to persons in superior stations, and certainly contrived to move in a higher sphere of society than any other English artist had done before him. Thus he procured for Professors of the Arts a consequence, dignity, and reception, which they had never before possessed in this country. In conversation he preserved an equable flow of spirits, which rendered him at all times a most desirable companion, ever ready to be amused, and to contribute to the amusement of others. He practised the minute elegancies, and, though latterly a deaf companion, was never troublesome.*

Although easy and complying in his intercourse with the world, yet in his profession, having, by unremitting study, matured his judgment, he ne-

* His deafness, I have been informed, first came upon him from a cold which he caught by his intense application in the winter season, in the unaired rooms of Raffaele in the Vatican.

ver sacrificed his opinion to the casual caprices of his employers, and without seeming to oppose theirs, still followed his own. He had temper to bear with the defects of others, as well as capacity to understand their good qualities, and he possessed that rare wisdom which consisted in a thorough knowledge, not only of the real value of things, but of the genius of the age he lived in, and of the characters and prejudices of those about him.

Far from over-rating his own talents, he did not seem to hold them in that degree of estimation which they deservedly obtained from the public. In short, it may be safely said, that his faults were few, and that those were much subdued by his wisdom; for no man had ever more reverence for virtue, or a higher respect for unsullied fame.*

* Although at the very outset of his career in life he gained both praise and flattery, yet he still preserved his natural humility. An instance of early tribute to his merit has fallen into my hands since the former part of these sheets were printed, written at the beginning of the year 1748, but which, although out of place, I am unwilling to omit, as it evidently shews the high estimation in which this *great painter* was then held.

“ To Mr. Reynolds, on his having painted a very beautiful young lady in a bonnet and capuchin, which last was a kind of veil then much in fashion.

“ Vultus nimium lubricus aspici.”

HORACE.

Whilst the original's unknown,

I still can call my heart my own;

Unhurt the copy view :

As to his person ; in his stature Sir Joshua Reynolds was rather under the middle size, of a florid complexion, roundish blunt features, and a lively aspect ; not corpulent, though somewhat inclined to it, but extremely active ; with manners uncommonly polished and agreeable.

In conversation, his manner was perfectly natural, simple and unassuming. He most heartily enjoyed his profession, in which he was both fortunate and illustrious ; and I agree with Mr. Malone who says he appeared to him to be the happiest man he had ever known. He was thoroughly sensible of his rare lot in life and truly thankful for it ; his virtues were blessed with their full reward.

It is a common, but a just observation, that virtue cannot exist where irregularity is present ; and the converse is true as applied to Sir Joshua's

Whilst thus the beauteous face you shade,
 And eyes too bright, by nature made,
 Nor death, nor wounds ensue.
 Thus at the sun thro' mists we gaze,
 Our sight from his enfeebling rays,
 The vapour dark securing ;
 But when no medium screens his light,
 His beams are so severely bright
 The blaze there's no enduring.
 Friend to your sex ! our thanks receive,
 'Tis owing to your art we live ;
 Ourselves unwounded find :
 Such charms were dangerous you knew,
 So o'er the piece a veil you threw
 In pity to mankind."

mode of life, which was so regular as to produce correctness without degenerating into insipidity, or tediousness to his friends by unnecessary and troublesome precision.

Rising at eight o'clock in general, he was enabled to retire from the breakfast table to his painting room about ten, where, for an hour at least, he occupied himself in arranging the subordinate accessories in such of his works as he was then engaged in, or perhaps in preserving some new ideas by a sketch.

The hours dedicated to his sitters were generally from eleven to four, but not with rigid attention, as he often gave a relaxation to his mind by receiving the visits of particular friends. Yet upon the whole, his application was great, nay, in some measure, excessive; for it is very true, as he himself observed to Malone, that such was his love of his art, and such his ardour to excel, that he had often, and during the greater part of his life, laboured as hard with his pencil, as any mechanic working at his trade for bread.

Considering the hospitable elegance of his own table, and the number of his friends, it is not to be wondered at that his invitations to other tables were pretty numerous. Of these, however, he seldom accepted more than two in the week, during the winter; and though his regulated plan was to have his friends once at home during the same period, yet it frequently happened that his table

was filled much oftener by the most estimable and remarkable men in public life. In such companies, intellectual pleasures must be considered as the most important: yet neither he nor his friends disdained the good things which affluence could provide, and of course every elegance and every luxury were always to be found there in moderation.

Mr. Malone draws the comparison between the character of Lælius as given by Mr. Melmoth, and Sir Joshua Reynolds, which seems in many respects to be singularly similar, but too long for insertion; here I shall only give the concluding part, which says—

“ In public estimation, in uniform success in life, in moderation in prosperity, in the the applause and admiration of his contemporaries, in simplicity of manners and playfulness of humour, in good sense and elegant attainments, in modesty and equability of temper, in undeviating integrity, in respect for received and long-established opinions, in serenity, cheerfulness, and urbanity, the resemblance must be allowed to be uncommonly striking and exact.”

As before observed, Sir Joshua had many pupils who resided for years under his roof. It is a surprising fact, however, that scarcely any of their names have been heard of as painters. Most of them have pined in poverty and died in want, miserable to themselves, and a disgrace to the art.

To account for this seeming paradox many reasons may be assigned. First, the vast difficulties of the art of painting render its higher branches unattainable to nine-tenths of those persons who profess, or pretend to study it: Secondly, Sir Joshua, never having received a well-founded education in the academies of art, was forced to make his own way by the strength of his genius and unwearied industry: hence those excellencies which he possessed could not be imparted or taught to another, and what could be taught he did not sufficiently possess. It is art which the scholar is to learn, and not genius. Sir Joshua seems to have disdained the rules of art, and may be said to have snatched a grace beyond them. But the young painter who daubs because he fancies Sir Joshua daubed, is like the fool who purchased the lamp of Epictetus. The best reason that can be assigned for his having a more enlarged notion of grace and greatness than his contemporaries is, that he had more information and understanding than they. A vulgar man may acquire what is termed cleverness, but cannot arrive at greatness; which can only be attained by him, who unites general information with taste and feeling.

Together with other various tributes to the memory of departed excellence, we must not omit the following extract from Mr. Sotheby's poetical epistle to Sir George Beaumont, in which the subject of our biography is so elegantly charac-

terized, and which has been published since his death.

‘ Hail! guide and glory of the British School,
 Whose magic line gave life to every rule.
 Reynolds! thy portraits, true to nature, glow’d,
 Yet o’er the whole ideal graces flow’d;
 While forth to sight the living likeness came,
 Souls touch’d by genius, felt the higher aim.
 Here, where the public gaze a Siddons views,
 See fear and pity crown the Tragic muse.
 There, girt with flames, where Calpé gleams afar,
 In dauntless Heathfield hail the god of war.
 Painter of grace! Love gave to thee alone,
 Corregio’s melting line, with Titian’s tone,
 Bade Beauty wear all forms that breathe delight,
 And a new charm in each attract the sight:
 Here a wild Thais wave the blazing brand,
 There yield her zone to Cupid’s treach’rous hand;
 An empress melt the pearl in Egypt’s bowl,
 Or a sly gypsey read the tell tale soul.
 Painter of passion! horror in thy view
 Pour’d the wild scenes that daring Shakspeare drew;
 When the fiend scowl’d on Beaufort’s bed of death,
 And each weird hag ’mid lightnings hail’d Macbeth.

Thou l’ante led to Famine’s murky cave;
 “ Round you mute father hear his children rave;
 Behold them stretch’d beneath his stony eye,
 Drop one by one, and gaze on him, and die;
 So strain each starting ball in sightless stare,
 And each grim feature fix in stern despair.”——

No earth-born giant struggling into size,
 Stretch’d in thy canvass, sprawls before our eyes;
 The mind applies its standard to the scene,
 Notes, with mute awe, the more than mortal mien,
 Where boundless genius brooding o’er the whole,
 Stamps e’en on babes sublimity of soul.
 Whether, where terror crowns Jove’s infant brow,
 Before the God-head aw’d Olympus bow,

Or in yon babe, th' Herculean strength upholds
 Th' enormous snakes, and slacks their length'ning folds;
 Or while, from Heaven, celestial Grace descends,
 Meek on his knees the infant Samuel bends,
 Lifts his clasp'd hands, and as he glows in prayer,
 Fixes in awful trance his eye on air.

Yet not fair forms, by Reynolds' hand design'd,
 No, nor his magic pen that paints the mind;
 That pen, which erst on charm'd Ilyssus' shore
 Th' exulting Graces to their Plato bore,
 When Fancy wove, for Truth, her fairest flow'rs;
 And Wisdom commun'd with the Muse's bow'rs;
 Not these suffice —————'

Little remains now to add, only, that in the year 1795 that fine collection of pictures of the ancient masters, which Sir Joshua had so judiciously amassed, actually fetched the sum of 10,319*l.* 2*s.* 6*d.*; whilst, in the succeeding year, various historical and fancy pictures of his own painting, accompanied by some unclaimed portraits, were sold for 4,505*l.* 18*s.*; these sums were independent of his most valuable collection of prints and drawings, which since that have come to the hammer.

To the account of his death, I have nothing to add. The following notice was given at the time of the sale of his own works in the daily papers, and may to many readers be interesting.

SALE OF SIR JOSHUA REYNOLDS'S PICTURES.

“ These invaluable remains of the great master of the British School are 199 in number, portraits finished and unfinished—sketches and historical compositions, studies, &c. affording a complete view of his progressive merits, from his first rude beginnings to a degree of excellence which we may reasonably conjecture will not speedily be equalled.

“ Mr. Greenwood’s Room yesterday afforded also a secondary pleasure, which the moralist will best appreciate. Those living artists who have done most honour to their great and illustrious leader, attended with fond delay, to behold, for the last time together, his numerous and fascinating progeny.

“ The magnets of the morning were—

The Death of Dido,	Cupid and Psyche,
The Infant Moses,	The Theory of the Arts,
The Duke & Duchess of Hamilton,	Mrs. Robinson, C. Greville,
St. John,	And a beginning of Puck,
Hope nursing Love,	Ugolino, a head, &c. &c.

Various spirited sketches of large pictures, and a

more splendid example of taste and brilliant colouring than any gallery of a single artist can exhibit.

“It is no pleasing reflection, that the majority of the portraits consists of pictures by which the sitters hoped a kind of protracted existence, and which the parsimony and ingratitude of their heirs never redeemed, by paying up the remainder of the artist’s price.”

This seems to have been written merely with a view to assist the sale; but as it contains some information, I was unwilling to omit it.

It may seem superfluous to cotemporary readers to mention that in the year 1813 a Commemoration of his talents was celebrated by the “British Institution,” in which they were most liberally aided by the patriotic kindness of a considerable part of the possessors of specimens of Sir Joshua Reynolds’s pencil; a most brilliant collection of his works being thus exhibited at the rooms of the institution, late the Shakspeare Gallery.

The highest compliment that was ever paid to Sir Joshua or his works was by a gentleman, not a connoisseur in art; who, when he saw the exhibition of this painter’s works, together in a mass, said that it had raised his idea of mankind, and gave him a better opinion of the world than he had ever before conceived. This was a pure sentiment of the heart.

It must be very gratifying to those who revere the memory of Sir Joshua to reflect, that so attractive were the excellencies of his works, without the aid of any newspaper paragraphs, &c. that the exhibition of them brought a very handsome sum of money to the proprietors of the rooms, and also raised the credit of the British School of Art : and we may rejoice to find, that this scheme having been so liberally encouraged by the people in general, the same project will be pursued, so that for a very small price to each individual, the public at large may view with patriotic exultation the admirable labours of their late illustrious painters, who have conferred lasting honour on their country.

It is also to be remarked of such exhibitions, if thus amply patronized by the nation, that the profits from them, managed with skill and prudence, will enable the projectors of the scheme to lend a helping hand to forward the polite arts of England.

Carlo Maratti used to say, that he considered himself as the heir of the Carracchi, and therefore demanded the high prices for his works which his great predecessors ought to have been paid, but could not obtain.

In like manner, the large sum received from exhibiting the works of those lamented, excellent painters, our compatriots, if bestowed with judgment on the living artists, will thus constitute them heirs of their unrewarded predecessors.

But at the same time it should be remembered what J. J. Rousseau says upon this subject, and which has but too much truth in it. His observation is—That so many establishments in favour of the arts, only hurt them; by indiscreetly multiplying the subjects, we confound them; true merit remains smothered in the crowd, and the honours due to the most skilful are always bestowed on the most intriguing.

True talents, true genius, have a certain simplicity, which renders them less unquiet, less restless, less ready to shew themselves, than an apparent and false talent, which we take for the true; and which consists only in a vain desire to shine, without the requisites for insuring success.

If this work descend to posterity, though not so lasting as his fame, it may be proper that I should here close these Memoirs with also noticing, that in the room in which his works were exhibited the company dined, at its opening—a dinner highly honoured by the presence of the Prince Regent, numerous nobility, and eminent artists—a small whole length model of this great painter was placed at the head of the room, and accompanied by the following inscription from the pen of R. P. Knight, Esq.

“ Joshua Reynolds

Pictorum sui seculi facile principi,

Et splendore et commissuris Colorum,

Alternis vicibus Luminis et Umbræ

Sese mutuo excitantium,
 Vix ulli Veterum secundo ;
 Qui, cum summa artis, gloria modeste uteretur,
 Et morum suavitate et vitæ elegantiâ
 Perinde commendaretur ;
 Artem etiam ipsam, per orbem terrarum,
 Languentur et prope inter mortuam
 Exemplis egregie venustis suscitavit,
 Præceptis exquisite conscriptis illustravit
 Atque emendationem et expolitiorem,
 Posteris exercendam tradidit ;
 Laudem ejus fautores et amici
 Hanc effigiem posuerunt.

MDCCCXIII.

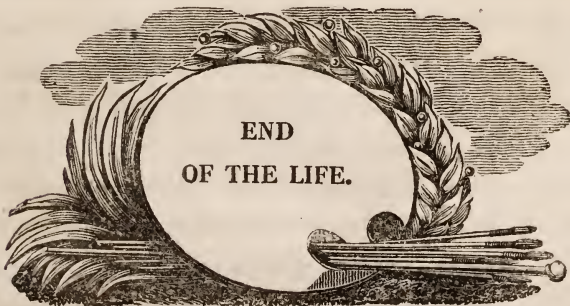
To Sir Joshua Reynolds

Confessedly the first artist of his time ;
 Scarcely inferior to any of the Ancients,
 In the splendor and combination of colours,
 In the alternate succession of light and shade,
 Mutually displaying each other :
 Who, whilst he enjoyed with modesty the first
 honours of his Art,
 Was equally commended
 For the suavity of his manners and the elegance
 of his mind ;
 Who restored, by his highly beautiful models,
 The Art itself, languishing and almost extin-
 guished

In every part of the world ;
Who illustrated it by the admirable precepts
contained
In his writings,
And transmitted it in a correct and refined state
To be cultivated by posterity ;
The friends and admirers of his Talents
Have raised this monument.

1813.

The late display of the labours of this deceased ornament of Britain having been thus detailed, I have nothing further to observe but that the monument to the memory of Sir JOSHUA REYNOLDS, executed by Mr. Flaxman, is now erected in ST. PAUL'S CATHEDRAL, and makes one of the four statues which are placed near the choir ; the others being those of Dr. JOHNSON, Sir WILLIAM JONES, and Mr. HOWARD.



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APPENDIX.

MEMOIR OF WILLIAM GANDY.

As there is no record of this William Gandy preserved in any manner but what he has formed for himself by his pictures, which being without his name marked on them are known but to few, and thus will soon be wholly unknown, I cannot resist the impulse of preserving the small record which tradition gives of him as a just tribute to his memory before it is too late, and thus be lost for ever. This must be an excuse for the adding of a subject which at first sight may seem unconnected with our present plan ; but will have this good effect, at least, that by pointing him out as one admired both by Sir Joshua Reynolds, and Sir Godfrey Kneller (in whose time he lived), it may be the means of preserving many of his works which otherwise might have been destroyed by those ignorant of their merit.

WILLIAM GANDY was an itinerant painter in the county of Devon, where he lived and died; but it is uncertain whether he was a native of that county. He was the son of James Gandy, of whom Pilkington in his Dictionary of the Painters gives the following account :

“ James Gandy, painted portrait.

“ Died 1689, aged 70.

“ This painter, although he was a very able artist, is but little known; he was born in the year 1619, and instructed by Vandyke, and his works are a sufficient proof of the signal improvement he received from the precepts and example of that great master.

“ The cause of his being so totally unknown was his being brought into Ireland by the old Duke of Ormond, and retained in his service; and as Ireland was at that time in a very unsettled condition, the merit and memory of this master would have been entirely unnoticed, if some of his performances, which still subsist, had not preserved him from oblivion. There are at this time in Ireland many portraits painted by him of noble men and persons of fortune, which are very little inferior to Vandyke, either for expression, colouring, or dignity; and several of his copies after Vandyke, which were in the Ormond collection

at Kilkenny, were sold for original paintings of Vandyke."

Thus much is related of the father by Pilkington, who seems to have known nothing of William the son ; a circumstance not much to be wondered at, as William's little fame has seldom passed the limits of the county in which he resided ; and where he spent his life in a state of indigence most truly pitiable, if a great part of it did not deserve to be considered as much his own fault, as his misfortune.

He was a man of a most untractable disposition, very resentful, of unbounded pride, and in the latter part of his life both idle and luxurious ; of which I remember to have heard many instances from my father, who knew him, and whose portrait he painted when a child.

He was at all times totally careless of his reputation as a painter ; and more particularly so if any thing happened in the course of his business to displease him. He was once employed to paint the portrait of a Mr. John Vallack, an apothecary of Plymouth, who had amassed a large fortune in that town ; and as Gandy always attended at the houses of his employers to execute his work (having no room of his own fit to receive a sitter), he expected, of course, to be invited to dinner (which was not the least of his gratifications), concluding he should be well entertained by his patron ; but unfortunately for Gandy, it was Mr. Vallack's

custom to have a certain fixed dinner for each day of the week, and by ill luck it happened to be a Saturday when the portrait was begun, and the dinner on that day was nothing more than pork and peas, to the utter mortification and disappointment of the Artist, who at his return to his lodgings vented his rage in curses on his employer's meanness, and not having good nature enough to be thoroughly reconciled to him afterwards, totally neglected the picture. This anecdote is certified by the performance itself which I have seen, and a very indifferent performance it is.

Another instance which I shall give, discovers a singular display of pride and poverty.

He was invited, together with a friend of his, to visit Sir William Carew, at Anthony House, which is on the other side of the River Tamer, and at such a distance from Plymouth, where they lived, that it was nearly impossible for them to return to their home on the same day, and in consequence they were to sleep at Sir William's: but it happened that the house at that time was so crowded with visitors, that there was a necessity for Gandy and his friend to content themselves with one bed between them. This seemed to mortify Gandy's pride at the moment; and they were no sooner retired to their chamber than he began to give free vent to his ill humour, in curses on the indignity thus offered them, by treating two gentlemen (to use his own term) in such a manner, and not al-

lotting to each of them a separate chamber. Notwithstanding all the reasons which were offered to him, from the necessity of the case, as the house was at that time so filled with guests, nothing that could be urged was sufficient to appease the rage of Gandy; and of this the secret and real cause was now about to transpire, for on taking off his clothes to go to bed, it evidently appeared that, instead of proper linen, he had two shirts on (if such might be called shirts), both of which were in such a ruinous and tattered condition, such a mere bundle of rags, that out of the two it would have been impossible to realize half a one fit for wear.

His portraits (for I believe he never painted any thing else) are slight and sketchy, and show more of genius than labour; they indeed demonstrate facility, feeling, and nice observation, as far as concerns the head; but he was so idle and so unambitious that the remainder of the picture, except sometimes the hand, was commonly copied from some print after Sir Godfrey Kneller.

It is evident that there must have been some period of his life when he pursued his profession with assiduity and energy, which alone could have gained him the facility of practice that he possessed; but in the latter part of his life he could never be induced to paint at all, unless driven to it by mere want; and he had no sooner acquired a little money than it was as quickly gone in lux-

urious feeding, which seemed to be his great passion.

There is little reason to doubt that he might have been the greatest painter of his time, had he not been his own greatest enemy.

There is no portrait of himself existing that I ever heard of, and when, how, or where he died or was buried, I never knew, but most probably at Exeter, as that city was chiefly the place of his residence.

He came to Plymouth about the year 1714, and was then a man advanced in years. My grandfather was a great friend to him; but Gandy quitted Plymouth much in his debt, departing secretly and leaving only a few old books and prints behind him.

I have seen in Devonshire several very fine heads of his painting, particularly one of the Rev. John Gilbert, Canon of the cathedral of Exeter, and vicar of St. Andrew's, Plymouth, and father of the archbishop of York, of that name: it is less than life, and has been engraved by Vertue for the volume of Sermons, published by Mr. Gilbert. There is also a fine portrait of the Reverend Nathaniel Harding, at that time a famous dissenting preacher of Plymouth; this picture was painted by the desire of my father's mother, and given by her to the daughter of Mr. Harding, after his death.

There is likewise a portrait of one Tobias Langton of Exeter, remarkably fine. Sir Godfrey Kneller, who was once at Exeter, by chance saw this picture, and with astonishment inquired who was the artist capable of having painted it, and when told it was by a painter of that city who was in great poverty, he exclaimed “ Good God ! why does he bury his talents in the country when he ought immediately to come to London, where his merit would soon be known and properly rewarded ?”

One of my father when a child of four years of age is equally excellent.—One of my father’s mother is likewise extremely fine, although Gandy, from his ill nature, was quarrelling with her the whole time he was painting it. The drapery of this picture is painted in a slovenly manner from a print after Kneller; but there is a hand in it very finely executed.

There are also a great many of his pictures scattered about Devonshire and Cornwall; some very fine and many more good for nothing, though the worst of them still look like the careless productions of a good painter; but the draperies were always so entirely neglected by him, that this very much conduces to destroy the general effect of the picture. He seemed never to have thought of fame, but only how to get rid of his work, that he

might the sooner receive the money, which was not above two guineas a head.

He wished to have it supposed that he was the natural son of the great Duke of Ormond; who was afterwards banished, and always insinuated that he had some secret reasons for not appearing publicly in London; whether this was really the case, or whether he only hoped to give himself importance by his mysterious speeches, I cannot determine.

I have learnt these particulars from my father, whose family had opportunities of being well acquainted with Gandy's history, in consequence of his having resided a long time in the house of my grandfather, who admired his talents, and esteemed him as the greatest artist of his time.

I have seen a portrait by Gandy's father (of whom Pilkington speaks) of the Duke of Ormond; it is in the possession of the Earl of Leicester, and this, as it was of his patron, may be supposed one of his best performances; if so, I must give the preference in ability to the son; for though this portrait is finished with much more care than any by the younger Gandy, yet it is very far from discovering so much genius.

It is remarkable that the drapery in this portrait is so exactly similar to that which we so often find in Vandyke's pictures, that it confirms Pilkington's

supposition of Gandy, the father, having been the assistant of Vandyke, and almost proves him to have frequently painted those parts in the pictures of that celebrated painter.

It appears to me to be highly probable that this James Gandy, the father, was a native of Exeter, as the son made choice of it for his place of residence, and also because that it is a well known name and family still remaining in that city. We find the name also in Prince's "Worthies of Devon."

I cannot close the memoir of this man without noticing how much it proves that the greatest abilities may become totally useless to the possessor, and lost to the world at large, if not directed by virtue and industry : for the lives of such persons, as they exhibit an example of the distresses to which idleness and want of moral principles may expose men of parts, may be an useful lesson to the rising generation, and prove a more powerful persuasive to industry, economy, and the right use of great talents, than the most laboured argument ; and as Johnson so exquisitely expresses it—

“ Those who, in confidence of superior capacities or attainments, disregard the common maxims of life, should be reminded, that nothing will supply the want of prudence ; and that negligence and irregularity long continued, will make know-

ledge useless, wit ridiculous, and genius contemptible.”

The example of Sir Joshua Reynolds is an illustrious contrast to this, where we see that great abilities, united to virtue, have raised for him an everlasting monument of fame.

L I S T

OF THE

HISTORICAL AND FANCY SUBJECTS,

TOGETHER WITH SOME OF THE

MOST ILLUSTRIOUS AND EMINENT PORTRAITS,

EXECUTED BY

SIR JOSHUA REYNOLDS.

<i>Subjects.</i>	<i>Possessors.</i>	<i>Prices.</i> Guineas.	<i>Engravers.</i>
Angel contemplating the Cross, bequeathed to	} Duke of Portland		
Ascension . . . . .	. . . . .	
Calling of Samuel	Duke of Rutland	100	Dean, 1788
Do. do.	Duke of Dorset	50	J. R. Smith, 1783
Do. do.	Earl of Darnley	75	Delatre, 1784
Do. do.	C. Long, Esq.		C. Knight, 1792
Cornelia & her Children (Lady Cockburn) . . . . .	. . . . .		C. Wilkins, 1791
Cauldron Scene in Macbeth ✓	Mr. Boydell	1000	Thew
Cardinal Beaufort	} Do. now Earl of } Egremont. }	500	{ Caroline Watson, 1792.
Dionysius the Areopagite . . . . .	. . . . .		Jenner, 1776
Death of Dido: for Mr. Bryant	Marchs. Thomond	200	Grozer
Holy Family: 500 <i>l.</i> to Macklin, sold to	Lord Gwydir	700	W. Sharp, 1792
Hercules strangling the Serpents	Empress of Russia	1500	Hodges, Walker
Infant Hercules in Cradle	Earl Fitzwilliam	150	Do. do. 1792
Infant Moses in the Bulrushes ✓	Duke of Leeds	125	J. Dean, 1786, 1791
Infant Jupiter	Duke of Rutland	100	Smith, 1775
King Lear	Marchs. Thomond		{ Marchi & Sharp, 1783
Nativity: for New College window	Duke of Rutland	1200	Earlom
St. John: for New College window	Marchs. Thomond		
Do.	— Willet, Esq.	150	Grozer, 1784
St. Michael slaying the Dragon: Copy from Guido ✓	} Marchs. Thomond		

<i>Subjects.</i>	<i>Possessors.</i>	<i>Prices.</i> Guineas.	<i>Engravers.</i>
School of Athens, from Raffaelle: Copy	Do.		
Do. travestied: now at Straffan, in Ireland	J. Henry, Esq.		
Ugolino and Children in the Dungeon	Duke of Dorset	400	Dixon
Virgin and Child: left unfinished	J. Bannister, Esq.	65	
Do. do.	Earl of Egremont		
Young Hannibal, a boy in armour			C. Townley, 1794
—			
Ariadne	W. Locke, Esq.	35	Doughty, 1779
Bacchante, portrait of Mad. Baccelli	Duke of Dorset		J. R. Smith, 1784
Do.	Sir W. Hamilton	50	Do. Do.
Bacchus, portrait of Master Herbert	Lord Porchester	75	Smith, 1776
Beggar Boy, with Child & Cabbage-nets	Duke of Dorset		Hodges
The Bird			J. Dean
Boy laughing	— Bromwell, Esq.	50	
Boy with a Dog			Dean
Do. in a Turkish Dress			Do. 1778
Do. with Drawing in his Hand	Duke of Dorset	50	
Do. with Portfolio	Earl of Warwick	50	
Do. praying: since sent to France	Mr. Chamier	50	
Do. eating Grapes	{ Sir J. F. Leicester, Bart. late Mr. Shelley's }		Spilsbury
Do. reading	Sir H. Englefield	35	Hodges
Do. Do.	{ Sir J. F. Leicester, Bt. from Coll. of Judge Harding }		
Boy's School: heads of two Master Gawlers			Smith, 1788
Captive: has been called Cartouche, &c.	Rev. W. Long	80	Smith, 1777 & Dea
Captain of Banditti	J. Crewe, Esq.	35	
Careful Shepherdess			Eliz. Judkins, 1777
Cardinal Virtues, and four others: for the New College Window	Marchioness Thomond		Facius, 1781
Cælia (Mrs. Collyer) lamenting her Sparrow	Gen. Gwyn		J. Watson
Charity: for New Collegè window			Facius, 1781
Circe	Sir C. Bunbury	35	
Children in the Wood	Lord Palmerstone	50	J. Watson, 1772
Child with Angels	Duke of Leeds		

<i>Subjects.</i>	<i>Possessors.</i>	<i>Prices.</i> Guineas.	<i>Engravers.</i>
Child sleeping	S. Rogers, Esq.		Doughty, 1780
Do. do.	Earl of Aylesford		
Comic Muse (Mrs. Abingdon)	Duke of Dorset		Sherwin
Cleopatra dissolving the Pearl (Kitty Fisher)	Lord Boringdon		Fisher
Continence of Scipio			
Conway Castle, a Landscape			W. Birch, 1790
Covent Garden Cupid			Dean, 1779
Cottagers, from Thomson, for Macklin's Gallery			Bartolozzi, 1784
Count La Lippe: portrait	H. R. H. Prince Regent		
Master Crewe as Henry VIII.	J. Crewe, Esq.		Smith, 1776
Cupid and Psyche (Miss Greville and brother)	C. Long, Esq.	250	Mac Ardell, 1762
Do. do.		S. Rogers, Esq.	
Cupid in the Clouds			Dean
Cupid sleeping			Do. 1778
Cymon and Iphigenia: the last fancy piece ever executed by Sir Joshua	Marchs. Thomond		F. Harwood
Diana (Lady Napier)			
Do. (Duchess of Manchester)			J. Watson
Edwin: from Beattie's Minstrel	Duke of Leeds	55	
Faith: for New College window			Facius, 1787
Family of the Duke of Marlborough		700	
Fortitude: for new College window			Do. Do.
Fortune teller (Lord and Lady Spencer)	Duke of Marlborough		Sherwin
Garrick between Tragedy and Comedy: sold to J. J. Angerstein, Esq. for 250 guineas	Earl of Halifax	300	T. Watson and Fisher, 1762, &c.
Garrick, as Kiteley . . . . .					Finlayson, 1769
Mr. and Mrs. Garrick sitting on a garden seat, and Garrick reading to her	Hon. T. Fitzmaurice	150	
Girl with Bird's-nest			N. Desenfans, Esq.
Do. with Bird-cage	Duke of Dorset		
Do. with Muff	Marchs. Thomond		Jenner
Do. with Cat (Felina)	N. Desenfans, Esq. now Sir J. F. Leicester, Bt.		Collyer, 1790
Do. with Kitten . . . . .				Marchs. Thomond	Bartolozzi, 1787
Do. drawing (Miss Johnson)			Grozer, 1790

<i>Subjects.</i>	<i>Possessors.</i>	<i>Prices.</i> Guineas.	<i>Engravers.</i>
Girl leaning on a Pedestal	Visc. Palmerstone	75	Baldry
Do. laughing	Earl of Lonsdale		
Gypsy Fortune-teller	Duke of Dorset	350	Sherwin
Do.	Marchs. Thomond		
Gleaners (Mrs. Macklin and Miss Potts)	Mr. Macklin	300	
Heads of Angels: study from daughter of Lord William Gordon	Lord W. Gordon	100	
Hebe (Miss Meyer)			Fisher & Jacobi, 1780
Do. (Mrs. Musters)			J. R. Smith, 1799
Hope nursing Love	Henry Hope, Esq.	150	
Do.	Lord Holland		Do. 1777
Do.	Marchs. Thomond		Fisher, 1771
Hope: for New College Window			Facius, 1781
Innocence	J. Harman, Esq.		Grozer, 1788
Infant Academy: bequeathed to	Lord Palmerstone		Hayward
Juno (Lady Blake)			J. Dixon, 1771
Justice: for New College window			Facius, 1781
Lady Sarah Bunbury sacrificing to the Graces	Sir C. Bunbury		Fisher
Lady with Flowers			Do.
L'Allegro (Mrs. Hale)	Lord Harewood		Watson, &c.
Landscape	Earl of Aylesford	50	
Do. View from Richmond Villa			Jones and Birch
Lesbia	Duke of Dorset	75	Bartolozzi, 1788
Lord Sidney & Col. Ackland, as Archers	Earl of Caernarvon		
Love untying the Zone of Beauty: called the Snake in the Grass	Earl of Carysfort	200	J. R. Smith, 1787
Do. Do.	Prince Potemkin	100	
Do. Do. a present to	Henry Hope, Esq.		
Original Design for Do.	Sir J. F. Leicester, Bt. from Westall's Gallery		
Madona			Blackmore
Marchioness Townshend, Mrs. Gardner, and Hon. Mrs Beresford, decorating a Term of Hymen	Lord Mountjoy	450	T. Watson
Melancholy (Miss Jones)			
The Blackguard Mercury			Dean, 1777
Miranda (Hon. Mrs. Tollemache) and Caliban	Earl of Dysart		J. Jones, 1786

<i>Subjects.</i>	<i>Possessors.</i>	<i>Prices.</i> Guineas.	<i>Engravers.</i>
Muscipula, Girl with Mouse-trap .	Count d'Adhemar	50	Jones, 1786
Nymph (Mrs. Hartley) and young Bacchus }	Earl of Carysfort		
Nymph and Boy }	J. J. Angerstein, Esq.		
Old Man's Head }	— Edridge, Esq.		J. Watson
Do. reading a Ballad }	Duke of Rutland		Okey
Omai, the Native of Otaheite }	J. W. Steers, Esq.		Jacobi, 1777
Oxford Window (a general plate) . . . . . }	. . . . . }		Earlom
Pouting Girl }	G. Hardinge, Esq.		
Prudence: for New College window . . . . . }	. . . . . }		Facijs, 1781
Puck, from Midsummer Night's Dream: done for Alderman Boydell }	S. Rogers, Esq.	100	Schiavonetti
Resignation, from Goldsmith's Deserted Village (White, the Pa- viour) }	Marchs. Thomond		T. Watson, 1772
Robinette (Hon. Mrs. Tollemache) }	Earl of Lonsdale		J. Jones, 1787
Shepherd Boy }	Lord Irwin	50	{ Barnard, Spils- bury, 1788
Do. do. }	Marchs. Thomond		
Shepherdess with a Lamb }	Do.		J. Grozer, 1784
Shepherd and Shepherdesses }	Do.		
Mrs. Siddons as the Tragic Muse }	W. Smith, Esq.	700	Hayward, 1787
St. Agnes (Mrs. Quarrington) }	R. P. Knight, Esq.	50	{ Chambers, 1787 Bettelini
St. Cecilia (Mrs. Sheridan and two Misses Purdons) }	R. B. Sheridan, Esq.	150	Dickinson, 1776
St. George (Francis Duke of Bedford and Brothers) . . . . . }	. . . . . }		V. Green, 1778
St. John (Master Wynne, now Sir Watkyn Williams) . . . . . }	. . . . . }		J. Dean, 1776
Strawberry Girl }	Earl of Carysfort	50	T. Watson, 1774
Studios Boy }	{ P. Metcalfe, Esq. now Sir J. F. Leicester, Bart. }		Dean, 1777, Smith
Thais }	Mr. Greville		F. Bartolozzi, 1792
Temperance: for New College window . . . . . }	. . . . . }		Facijs, 1787
Theory of Painting }	Royal Academy		J. Grozer, 1785
Do. do. }	Marchs. Thomond		
Do. do. }	J. Hughes, Esq.		
Triumph of Truth (Dr. Beattie) }	Mrs. Glennie		J. Watson, 1775

<i>Subjects.</i>	<i>Possessors.</i>	<i>Prices.</i> Guineas.	<i>Engravers.</i>
Two Groupes of celebrated Characters done for the	Dilletanti Society		
Tuccia, the Vestal Virgin, from Gregory's Ode to Meditation		Mr. Macklin	300
Venus chiding Cupid for casting Accounts	Earl of Charlemont	100	Bartolozzi, 1784
Venus do. bequeathed to the		E. of Upper Ossory		J. R. Collyer, 1786
Do. do. painted for Sir B. Boothby	Sir T. Bernard		
Venus, and Boy piping	J. J. Angerstein, Esq.	250	
Una, from Spenser (Miss Beauclerck)	Marchs. Thomond		T. Watson, 1782
Wang-y-Tong, a Chinese Boy	Duke of Dorset	70	

Archbishop Markham, of York			Fisher & Watson 1778
————— Robinson, primate of Ireland			Houston, 1765
————— Burke, of Tuam			J. R. Smith, 1784
Admiral Barrington			Earlom, 1780
————— Boscawen			Mac Ardell, 1757
Mrs. Abington	Lord Boringdon		Judkins, 1772
Bishop Percy, of Dromore			Dickinson, 1775
————— Shipley, of St. Asaph			Smith, 1777
————— Newton, of Bristol	Abp. of Canterbury		Watson, 1775
Joseph Barretti	Mrs. Piozzi		Hardy, 1794
Archibald Bower			Faber
Edmund Burke			J. Watson, 1771
Do. do.			Hardy, 1780
Mr. Chauncey	— Carter, Esq.		Caroline Watson
Count Belgioso			Jacobi
Colonel Tarleton			J. Smith, 1782
Countess of Berkeley			Mac Ardell, 1757
————— Carlisle			J. Watson, 1773
————— Cornwallis			Do. 1771
————— Coventry			Do.
————— Essex			Mac Ardell
————— Harrington			V. Green, 1780
————— Hyndford			Mac Ardell
————— Northumberland			Houston, 1759
————— Pembroke and Son			Dixon

<i>Portraits.</i>	<i>Possessors.</i>	<i>Engravers.</i>
Two Miss Crewes	Dixon
First Duke of Cumberland	Spooner
Late Duke of Cumberland	T. Watson, 1774
Duke of Bedford, two Brothers, and Miss Vernon	}	Smith
Duke of Devonshire	Faber, 1755
———— Gloucester	Pr. Sophia of Gloucester	
———— Marlborough	Houston
———— Orleans	Prince Regent	J. R. Smith, 1786
———— York	J. Jones, 1790
Honourable Miss Damer	J. R. Smith, 1774
Dr. Charles Burney	Mrs. Piozzi	Bartolozzi, 1781
— John Hawkesworth	J. Watson, 1773
— Lucas	Mac Ardell
— W. Robertson	Dixon, 1772
— Joseph Warton	Smith, 1777
Duchess of Ancaster	Houston, 1758
Do.	Dixon
Duchess of Buccleugh	Ja. Watson, 1775
———— Cumberland	Do. 1777, 1790
———— Devonshire	V. Green, 1780
———— Gloucester	Lady Waldegrave	Mac Ardell, 1762
———— Gordon	Dickinson, 1775
———— Rutland (Dowager)	V. Green, 1780
Samuel Dyer	Sir Ridley Colborne	Marchi, 1773
Earl of Albemarle	Fisher
———— Abercorn	Dean
———— Bath	Mac Ardell, 1758
———— Bristol (Augustus)	Fisher
———— Carlisle	Spilsbury, 1763
———— Dalkeith	V. Green
———— Dartmouth	Spilsbury
———— Gower	Fisher, 1765
———— Mansfield	Bartolozzi, 1786
———— Moira	Duke of York	Jones, 1792
———— Pembroke	Dixon, Watson 1772
———— Rothes	Mac Ardell, 1755
———— Strafford	Do. 1762
Mrs. Fitzherbert	
Samuel Foote	Blackmore, 1771

<i>Portraits.</i>	<i>Possessors.</i>	<i>Engravers.</i>
Monsieur Gautier (done at Paris)	.	H. Fess
Edward Gibbon	.	Hall, 1780
Oliver Goldsmith	Mrs. Piozzi	Marchi, 1770
Groupe: Lady Sarah Bunbury, Lady Susan Strangeways, and Charles James Fox	.	J. Watson
Warren Hastings	.	T. Watson, 1777
Soame Jenyns	.	Dickinson
Samuel Johnson	Mrs. Piozzi	J. Watson, 1770
Do.	.	Hall, 1787
Do.	.	Doughty, 1784
Angelica Kauffman	.	Bartolozzi, 1780
Miss Kemble	.	J. Jones, 1784
Mrs. Kennedy	.	T. Watson, 1771
Lady Bampfylde	.	Do.
— Broughton	.	Do. 1770
— Almeria Carpenter	.	J. Watson, 1763
— Chambers	.	Mac Ardell
— Elizabeth Keppel	.	Fisher
— Louisa Manners	.	V. Green
— Melbourne and Child	Viscount Melbourne	T. Watson
Three Ladies Waldegrave	.	V. Green
Lord Amherst	.	J. Watson
— Anson	.	Mac Ardell, 1755
— Camden	M. Camden	Basire, 1766
Do.	.	Ravenhill
— Cardross (Earl Buchan)	.	Mac Ardell
— Heathfield	.	Earlom, 1788
— Hood	.	J. Jones, 1783
— Ligonier, on horseback	.	Fisher
— Rodney	Marchs. Thomond	Dickinson, 1780
Do.	.	J. Watson
— Romney	.	Finlayson, 1773
— George Seymour	.	Fisher, 1771
Lord Chancellor Thurlow	.	Bartolozzi, 1782
THEIR MAJESTIES (two)	Royal Academy	Various
Guiseppe Marchi	.	Spilsbury
Marquis of Abercorn (a family piece)	.	
— Buckingham	.	Dickinson, 1778
— Granby	.	Houston, 1760

Portraits.

Possessors.

Engravers.

Marquis of Granby (with a horse)	.	.	.	J. Watson
—— Lansdowne, Lord Ashbur-	}	Sir T. Baring	.	.
ton, and Colonel Barré				
—— Rockingham	.	.	.	Fisher
—— Tavistock	.	Duke of Bedford	.	J. Watson, 1767
—— Tichfield	.	.	.	Jenner, 1777
Marchioness of Lothian	.	.	.	Spilsbury
—— Thomond	.	.	.	.
—— Townshend	.	.	.	V. Green
Mrs. Montague	.	.	.	Pollard
Mrs. Parker	.	T. L. Parker, Esq.	.	Browsholme
Nelly O'Brien	.	.	.	J. Watson
H. R. H. the Prince Regent	.	.	.	F. Howard, 1793
Princess Augusta	.	.	.	Mac Ardell, 1764
—— Sophia	.	.	.	.
Rev. Zachariah Mudge	.	.	.	J. Watson
—— Thomas Warton	.	.	.	Hodges, 1794
Samuel Reynolds, S. T. P.	.	.	.	Mac Ardell

Of SIR JOSHUA REYNOLDS himself the portraits have been so numerous, as to bid defiance to enumeration. These are all from his own pencil, with the exception of one by C. G. Stuart, an American, one by Zoffanii, and one by Mr. Breda, a Swedish painter. The best engravings are by . . .

V. Green, J. Collyer, J. Watson, C. Townley, I. K. Sherwin, R. Earlom, Pariset, Facius, S. W. Reynolds, Caroline Kirkley, Caroline Watson, T. Holloway, and the portrait which accompanies this work.

Sir Joseph Banks	.	.	.	Dickinson, 1774
— Charles Bunbury	.	.	.	Marchi
— William Chambers	.	Royal Academy	.	V. Green, 1780
— John Cust	.	.	.	J. Watson, 1769
— J. F. Leicester	.	Sir J. F. Leicester (One of the last works of the master.)	}	S. Reynolds
— Charles Saunders	.	.		
— John Wynne	.	.	.	Dean
Do:	.	.	.	Watson
Laurence Sterne	.	Earl of Ossory	.	Fisher
Viscount Downe	.	.	.	Do.

<i>Portraits.</i>	<i>Possessors.</i>	<i>Engravers.</i>
Viscount Keppel	Fisher, 1759
—— Sackville	Mac Ardell
Horace Walpole	Mac Ardell, 1757
Harry Woodward	Houston.



Even in the late Exhibition there were many which are not here enumerated:— indeed, a complete list, (if it were possible to procure it, would fill a volume.)

It is also proper to notice, that several of those here enumerated have been likewise engraved by other artists.

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Sir Joshua Reynolds, Kt.
Aged 22

Engraved by Robert Cooper from a Drawing by John Jackson.

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THE

L I F E

OF

SIR JOSHUA REYNOLDS,

LL.D. F. R. S. F. S. A. &c.

LATE PRESIDENT OF THE ROYAL ACADEMY.

COMPRISING

Original Anecdotes

**OF MANY DISTINGUISHED PERSONS,
HIS CONTEMPORARIES;**

AND A

BRIEF ANALYSIS OF HIS DISCOURSES.

BY

JAMES NORTHCOTE, ESQ. R. A.

THE SECOND EDITION, REVISED AND AUGMENTED.

IN TWO VOLUMES.



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MY presuming to write the Life of so illustrious a man as Sir Joshua Reynolds—a task which Burke declined and Malone has not performed—a work, also, so formidable in my own view of it—may require some apology; the truth is, that I was drawn into it by degrees, as we commonly are to all the sins we commit. I had at first written a short Memoir, at the earnest request of a friend, which was received with marks of approbation: I had also collected many little anecdotes, which I was told were worth preserving; and at length was persuaded to make the present attempt, or rather, I may say, pressed into the service.

Another motive to my undertaking this subject was, that several of the circumstances which I had to relate might help to

clear Sir Joshua, in respect to the unwarranted ideas, many persons have entertained, that he was not the author of his own Discourses, and that also in his youth he was particularly illiterate. That the latter is far from the truth may be seen in the letter from him to Lord E——, which is demonstrative of a delicate, elegant, grateful, and feeling mind; and is written with admirable simplicity of language.

Familiar letters by Sir Joshua are, however, very scarce: he was too busy and too wise to spend his time in an occupation which is more congenial to the idle and the vain, who are commonly very voluminous in their production of this article.

With respect to the anecdotes which I have inserted in these Memoirs, a few, I hope, may be gratifying to the Artist; others may amuse the leisure hours of my reader; some, I must acknowledge, are trifling, and may not do either: but I have given all I could recollect, and would not make myself the judge by omitting any, especially when I reflected, that minute particulars are frequently characteristic, and that trifles even are often amusing, when they relate to distinguished persons: therefore I felt unwill-

ling that any memorial, however slight, should be lost, as would inevitably happen, in a very few years.

It is my fixed opinion, that if ever there should appear in the world a Memoir of an Artist well given, it will be the production of an Artist: but as those rarely possess an eminent facility in literary composition, they have avoided the task; and the labour of writing the lives of Painters has been left to depend solely on the skill and ingenuity of men who knew but little concerning the subject they had undertaken, in consequence of which their works have been rendered useless and insipid.

I feel sensible that certain parts of these Memoirs may be considered tedious, some parts weak, and others not sufficiently connected with the original subject; but no man can be a competent judge of his own work: and I apprehend that, amongst a variety of readers, many will be pleased with what others will despise, and that one who presumes to give a public dinner must provide, as well as he is able, a dish for each particular palate; so that if I have given too much, it is at my own risk, and from an earnest desire to satisfy every one.

In respect to the volume on the whole, if I were to say, by way of excusing its imperfections, and to screen myself from severe censure, that it was composed in my idle hours, to relieve my mind when pressed by the difficulties of my profession, and therefore ought to be looked upon with a favourable eye, it would be asked, “Why I should, with any pretence to modesty or justice, suppose that the mere amusement of my idle hours can in any degree occupy the attention or contribute to the amusement of an enlightened public?” And if, on the other hand, I declare that it has cost me infinite pains and labour, and that I now humbly and respectfully offer it to the experienced world as the most perfect work I could produce, it may then be reasonably said that I ought to have performed my task much better, as the effect is by no means answerable to such labour.

Under these considerations, therefore, I shall say no more on this subject; but calmly submit the work to the animadversion of the public, and rest perfectly satisfied with their decision, as on the verdict of the purest jury, and one from whose judgment there can be no appeal.

PREFACE

To the Second Edition.

OF a man so various in his knowledge, so accomplished in his manners, and so eminent in his art, as Sir Joshua Reynolds, it can scarcely ever be possible to give an adequate biography. Had the Memoir been reserved for the nine years prescribed by the poet,* still would it have appeared before the public in an imperfect state: yet, I do not hesitate to confess, that if so much time for consideration and correction had been allowed, many parts might have been deemed proper to be omitted, and others more fully related, or more accurately arranged.

But the occasion on which the work first appeared was important, and, from the very short time between the conception and the

* Horace.

execution of the attempt, any very near approach to excellence ought not to have been expected, though perhaps my endeavours have gone so far beyond mediocrity, as not to be totally unworthy of him they were intended to celebrate.

Since the publication of the first edition many anecdotes have occurred to my recollection; and also, as it may naturally be supposed, the publication of the **Memoirs** of so distinguished a person, has led to my receiving, through the kindness of friends, details of many circumstances respecting him, with which I was not before acquainted.

These additions, together with my own memoranda, and which formed a supplement in the original work, I have now carefully incorporated in this new edition.

I shall now avail myself of this opportunity to notice a few observations that my friends have made, on the perusal of these **Memoirs**, as being the most important which have come to my knowledge.

That much new matter would be looked for, in such a work, is not unreasonable; yet if, in addition to a collection of hitherto unpublished notices, I am to be blamed for

having taken many circumstances, relative to Sir Joshua Reynolds, from the works of other writers, it should, at the same time, be remembered, that my intention was to give a life of him, as complete as was in my power; therefore, in omitting those particulars which I knew to be true, only because they had already been presented to the world, though scattered about in various publications, I must have rendered my own Memoir of him incomplete with respect to several important facts, which are very probably unknown to many of my readers; so that my work would have been merely an appendix to some lesser biographical sketch.

On this principle, I cannot help feeling that such facts will be considered as having an undoubted right to the place assigned them; and I should have been liable to reprehension, with stricter justice, for the omission of them.

The field of anecdote is an extensive one; yet, when we only glean, even after a plentiful harvest, our collection may be but scanty, though composed, perhaps, of some weighty ears: in fact, anecdotes are small characteristic narratives, which, though long

neglected or secreted, are always valuable, as being frequently more illustrative of the real dispositions of men than their actions of greater publicity, and therefore particularly requisite in biography.

To enter at large, indeed, into such particularity of circumstances, though highly useful, might be irksome to a philosopher: still it must be allowed, that curiosity, a weakness so incidental to mankind, ceases to be a weakness, when it occupies itself respecting persons who may deserve to attract the attention of posterity.

It is universally allowed, that no kind of reading is more beneficial than history, so it is likewise admitted, that there is no class of historical writing so applicable to common instruction as biography: for the lives of individuals are generally written more naturally, and with greater sincerity, than larger histories; nay, it may be advanced, that, in respect to benefit and application, we are much more interested in a knowledge of the lesser occurrences, even of great men's lives, than of the more exalted actions from whence they derive their glory, because it is in every one's power to imitate

them as men, though very few have opportunities of emulating them as heroes.

To know what we ought to pursue, and by what road that object may be attained, is, moreover, not the sole point which ought to occupy our attention: there is another not less necessary—the knowledge of what we ought to avoid; and on that principle it appears, that even the lives of bad men may become profitable examples, to point out the misery that is ever attendant on bad conduct.

The developement of weaknesses, however, only serves to entertain the malignant, except when the detail of those weaknesses may afford instruction, either from their fatal consequences, or when latent and accompanying virtues have tended to prevent the impending misfortune. But the most useful and valuable lessons are often contained in those private papers which eminent men leave behind them, and wherein their minds have thrown off all reserve:—a few of which description will be found in the course of this Second Edition.

PLATES

WHICH ILLUSTRATE THESE VOLUMES.



Portrait of Sir JOSHUA REYNOLDS, <i>to face the title page</i> , vol. I.	
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L I F E
OF
SIR JOSHUA REYNOLDS.

THE last century may be said to have formed an era in the progressive refinement of the British empire in all matters of taste; an era whence future historians will date our advancement in the arts, and our rivalry of the most polished nations.

In the early part of that century, however, so weak and puerile were the efforts of almost all our native professors, particularly in the *Art of Painting*, as to reflect equal disgrace on the age and nation. Philosophers, poets, statesmen, and warriors, of unquestionable eminence, were our own; but no Englishman had yet added the praise of the elegant arts to the other glories of his country, and which alone seemed wanting to fill up the measure of British fame. This remarkable deficiency in the efforts of genius in that department may, in a great degree, have arisen from the want of sufficient encouragement—a natural con-

sequence proceeding from the customs and manners of the preceding ages. What the fury of Zealots, in the reign of Henry the Eighth, had spared at the Reformation, was condemned by the Puritans; and the Arts, long disturbed by civil commotions, were, in a manner, expelled from Great Britain, or lay neglected in the sensual gallantry of the restored court of Charles the Second: nor were they revived by the party contentions that immediately followed, and wholly occupied the attention of all men, rendering them not only unfit to relish the Fine Arts, but also depriving them of leisure for their encouragement or protection.

In illustration of this, I may add the observation of an excellent author, that no set of men can have a due regard for the *Fine Arts* who are more enslaved by the pleasures arising from the grosser senses than charmed by those springing from, or connected with, reflection. The interests of intemperance and study are so opposite, that they cannot exist together in the same mind, or, at least, in such degree as to produce any advantages to the agent. When we indulge our grosser appetites beyond what we ought, we are dragged to contrition through the medium of anguish, and forego or violate that dignified calmness of the system which is only compatible with an honorable ambition—the sorceries of Circe, or the orgies of Bacchus, cannot administer or infuse efficient

inspiration to intellects debauched by unhallowed fervor; such as sink under their influence may, perhaps, feel contented with their ignorance of the value of superior merit, but will never exert their ability for, nor pant with the desire of being enviable, happy, or renowned.

The period, however, at length arrived in which taste was to have its sway; and to seize and improve the favorable opportunity, presented by the circumstances of the times to one possessed of superior talents and ardour of mind, was the fortunate lot of Sir Joshua Reynolds: yet, notwithstanding that he carried his art so high beyond our expectation, and has done so much, we cannot but lament that he was not more frequently called upon to exercise his great genius on subjects more suitable to so enlarged a mind.

It is worthy of remark, that the county of Devon has produced more painters than any other county in England; whilst, at the same time, it must be noticed, that till very lately there were fewer collections of pictures, of good ones at least, in that county, than in any other part of England of an equal space.

Of that county was Thomas Hudson, the best portrait painter, of his day, in the kingdom, and famous for being the master of Reynolds; also Francis Hayman, the first historical painter of his time; and Mr. Cosway, R. A., Mr. Humphry, R. A., Mr. Downman, Mr. Cross, all eminent in

their profession.* Of that county also was Sir Joshua Reynolds, eminent in the highest de-

* In addition to Devonshire artists, perhaps it may not be improper to notice Thomas Rennell, a scholar of Hudson, some years previous to the time of Sir Joshua, who was born of a good family, long settled in that county near Chudleigh, in the year 1718. After remaining some time at the grammar school of Exeter, he was put apprentice to Hudson, the painter, in London. How long he remained in that situation, I am not told; but, at his return into Devonshire, he settled at Exeter, with a wife and family. In process of time, he removed to Plymouth, where he resided many years, and drew several pictures, which were much admired in that neighbourhood, and gained the painter the patronage of the Duke and Duchess of Kingston, who endeavoured to draw him from his obscurity, by a promise of their house and interest in London. But this splendid offer was lost in an indolent mind; and from Plymouth, Rennell went to settle at Dartmouth, where he lived in great poverty several years. He has been known to lie in his bed for a week together, with no other subsistence than a cake and water. His art had only its turn with other amusements; and if a picture was completed in twelve months, it might be considered as very expeditious. No sooner was he in possession of a few pounds, than any stray object that presented itself was instantly bought, though, by so doing, the necessaries of food and clothing were to be sacrificed. About two years before his death, he experienced a comfortable asylum in the bounty of J. Seale, Esq. of Dartmouth; and the manner of his end evinced his serenity, if not his stoicism. Being asked whether his pains were not intense, he replied—"No; that they were such feelings as he could not describe, having never felt any thing of the kind before:" then wishing his friend a good night, turned his head aside and expired, October 19th, 1788.

The knowledge of Mr. Rennell was universal; for there was hardly a science that did not come within the sphere of his comprehension. As a painter, he is said to have possessed merit, particularly in the draperies of his portraits. In the neighbour-

gree; this illustrious painter, and distinguished ornament of the English nation, the subject of the following memoir, being born at Plympton, in Devonshire, on the 16th of July, 1723.* It has been noticed as not unworthy of record, that this event took place about three months before the death of Sir Godfrey Kneller, which happened on the 27th of the succeeding October, as if thus perpetuating the hereditary descent of the art; and preceding biographers are correct in stating that he was on every side of his genealogy connected with the clerical profession, as both his father and grandfather were in holy orders, besides having a paternal uncle, John, the elder brother of the family, who was a canon of St. Peter's, Exeter, and held a fellowship of the College at Eton. To

hood of Dartmouth are to be seen a few of his landscapes, but those very bad. He was very fond of chemistry, to which he devoted a considerable portion of his time. Most of his colours, which he prepared himself, went through that operation: and he is said to have discovered the art of fixing those which are the most fading. Of music he was passionately fond; and though he was not an excellent performer on any instrument, he composed some pieces which display genius. He also invented and constructed an instrument, containing sixty strings struck with a bow, moved by the foot, and modulated by keys. Some of his poetical pieces have been printed, but most of his papers were destroyed. Only one print has been taken from his works; to wit, a mezzotinto scraped by Fisher: it is from a portrait of the eminent Dr. John Huxham, M. D. of Plymouth, and the only portrait ever done of that physician.

* On a Thursday, about half an hour after nine o'clock in the morning.

this last, Exeter College, in Oxford, is much indebted for the bequest of a very valuable library, and for a considerable part of his fortune, of which it became possessed by his death in 1758. There is a mezzotinto print of him scraped by M^r Ardell, from a portrait painted by his Nephew, now in Eton College. In addition to these, it is recorded that his maternal grandfather was in orders, who was married to the daughter of the Reverend Thomas Baker, a most eminent mathematician of the seventeenth century, and one to whom the Royal Society were, on several occasions, particularly indebted.

This gentleman was the son of Mr. James Baker of Hilton in Somersetshire, who lived in great respectability, and was steward for the extensive estates of the family of Strangeways in Dorsetshire. Thomas was born at Ilton in 1625, and at the age of fifteen entered a student of Magdalen, at Oxford, from whence he was five years afterwards elected scholar of Wadham College; in which situation, in the year 1645, he proved his loyalty by the performance of some little service for King Charles I. in the garrison of that city. In 1647 he was admitted A. B., but quitted the university without completing that degree by determination; and having taken orders, he was appointed Vicar of Bishop's Nymmet, in Dorsetshire, where he resided many years in studious retirement. Here he applied himself assiduously

to the study of mathematics, in which he made a most extraordinary progress; but was totally unknown and unvalued in his obscure neighbourhood until 1684, when he published his famous "Geometrical Key," in quarto, and in Latin and English. The Royal Society now became ambitious of possessing the result of the labours of his learned life; and having, in particular, but a short time before his death, sent him some difficult and abstruse mathematical queries, he returned an answer so extremely satisfactory, that they voted him a gold medal, with an inscription dictated by the deepest sense of respect. This venerable mathematician died in 1690, and was buried in his own church at Bishop's Nymmet.

1723.

JOSHUA REYNOLDS was the son of the Reverend Samuel Reynolds and Theophila his wife, whose maiden name was Potter; he was the seventh of eleven children (five of whom died in their infancy,)* and it has been said by Mr. Malone, that his father was prompted to give him his scriptural appellation, in hopes that one so singular, or at least so uncommon, might, at some future period of his

* Of that part of the family which died in infancy, one child, named Theophila, lost her life by falling out of a window from the arms of a careless nurse.

life, perhaps, be the means of attracting for him the patronage of some person with a similar christian name. The good man's intentions, if the circumstance be true, were indeed never literally fulfilled; but instead of that, had he lived, he might have seen his son become an honor to his country.

I do not know on what evidence Mr. Malone gives this account concerning the introduction of the name of Joshua into the family, but this I know, from undoubted authority, (having seen it in Sir Joshua's own hand-writing, and therefore shall insert it, as it serves to controvert this very improbable story, which otherwise would altogether be unworthy of notice,) that it is certain that Sir Joshua had an uncle, whose christian name was Joshua, who dwelt at Exeter, and also was his godfather, but not being present at the baptism of his nephew, was represented by a Mr. Aldwin; the other godfather being a Mr. Ivie; and that his godmother was his aunt Reynolds of Exeter, represented also by proxy by a Mrs. Darly. Mr. Malone is in general very correct, but not in the circumstance he has related as above. I hope to be excused in being thus minutely particular, as it serves to prove a fact.

The register of Plympton, however, has, by some negligence or inaccuracy, deprived him of this baptismal name; for in that record it appears that he was baptized on the 30th of July, and he

is styled "Joseph, son of Samuel Reynolds, clerk." It is difficult to account for this error in any other way than that which Mr. Malone has given, by supposing that the name was written originally on a slip of paper in an abbreviated form—"Jos. son of Samuel Reynolds," and was at a subsequent period entered erroneously by the clergyman or clerk of the parish.

The maintenance of this family of six children was a tax sufficiently heavy on the slender income of the father, who possessed no other resources than those which he derived from the living of Plympton, and the grammar school annexed to it; the whole amounting to a very small sum: for the church was only a Windsor curacy, and he was so ill calculated for the management of a school, that, notwithstanding his possessing a high character for learning, its number was, before his death, literally reduced to one solitary scholar. Yet this mortification, which might have overpowered a more irritable temper, the good old man bore without any dejection of spirits, and he continued as much as ever beloved and respected for the variety of his knowledge, his philanthropy, his innocence of heart, and simplicity of manners.

Young Reynolds is said to have been for some time instructed in the classics by his father, who was very assiduous in cultivating the minds of his children; but as it is known that the son did

not display any proofs of classical attainments in the earlier part of his life, it is most probable that the mass of general knowledge, by which he was at a later period so eminently distinguished, was the result of much studious application in his riper years. A correct classical scholar, however, he could not be considered in any part of his life. That he was what the world terms a genius, and of the first order, cannot be disputed. He possessed talents of the highest kind, which he brought into full and constant action by a laudable ambition, the ardent desire of acquiring eminence in the profession which he had adopted.

It has been ignorantly said that his father intended him for the church, and sent him to one of the universities, where he received the degree of Master of Arts. This erroneous notion probably arose from his subsequent honorary degree of LL. D. I have, however, heard him say that his father at first intended him for the practice of physic; and that, if such had been the event, he should have felt the same determination to become the most eminent physician, as he then felt to be the first painter of his age and country.* Indeed it was ever his decided opinion, that the supe-

* I have been informed, that, at the period when his father intended him for the practice of physic, he paid some attention to the study of anatomy, in order to qualify himself for the medical profession; but, if this were true, his works do not evince much progress in that science.

riority attainable in any pursuit whatever does not originate in an innate propensity of the mind to that pursuit in particular, but depends on the general strength of the intellect, and on the intense and constant application of that strength to a specific purpose. He regarded ambition as the *cause* of eminence, but accident as pointing out the *means*. It is true that, at an early period of his life, he made some trifling attempts in drawing from common prints, but this cannot be considered as any proof that his faculties were more particularly fitted for the study of the arts than for any other, although it has been brought forward as such. The same thing has been done by ten thousand boys before him, and will be done by thousands yet to come, without any of them ever becoming great artists. Such displays of childish ingenuity are the most common refuge of idleness, in order to escape from the labour of a loathsome task; they have the double recommendation, that they are not enjoined by command, and that they are more easily performed with credit to the young candidate for applause, as they are not likely to be scrutinized by any competent judge of their merits.

There is now one of these very early essays in the possession of the family, a perspective view of a book case, under which his father has written, "Done by Joshua out of pure idleness." It is on the back of a Latin exercise. No wonder it

should appear like idleness to his father; doing that which you are not required to do, and neglecting to do that which is considered as your duty, will of course look very like idleness, and partake of it in a certain degree. Notwithstanding those little checks from the father, he no doubt perceived that he had raised himself in the opinion of his parent, which gave him encouragement to go on; and it is allowed by his biographer, that his father, who was himself fond of drawings, and had a small collection of anatomical and other prints, was pleased with his son's efforts. We are also informed from the same authority, that his elder sisters had likewise a turn for the art before him, and that his first essays were made in copying several little sketches done by them; he afterwards copied various prints which he met with among his father's books, such as those in Dryden's edition of Plutarch's Lives, and became particularly fond of the amusement. But Jacob Catts' book of Emblems was his great resource, a book which his great grandmother by the father's side, a Dutchwoman, had brought with her when she quitted Holland.

1732.

ÆTAT. 8.

YOUNG REYNOLDS had accidentally read the Jesuit's Perspective when he was not more than

eight years old, a proof of his capacity and active curiosity. He attempted to apply the rules of that treatise in a drawing which he made of his father's school, a building well suited to his purpose, as it stood on pillars. On showing it to his father, who was merely a man of letters, it seemed to strike him with astonishment, and he exclaimed, "Now this exemplifies what the author of the 'Perspective' asserts in his preface,—that by observing the rules laid down in this book, a man may do wonders;—for this is wonderful."*

Notwithstanding his father's surprize at his first pictorial efforts, it does not appear that he contemplated any extraordinary consequences from them; but how gratifying would it have been to him had he lived to see the full accomplishment of his early wonder: for a man may perhaps have more pure enjoyment through an illustrious son, than if the fame were all his own; as persons are proud of illustrious ancestors, because they think themselves possessed of all their glory, and that without sharing in their disappointments, their fatigues, or their dangers, in acquiring those honors.

* Of this school, an engraving accompanies this work, done from an original picture by Prout, a native of Devonshire. The school itself is one of the best in the county; it was erected in 1664, by Sir John Maynard, one of the trustees of Elize Hele, Esq., of Cornwood, near Plymouth, who gave 1500*l.* per annum to such uses.

The surprize he excited, and the praise he obtained, naturally inflamed his ambition to surmount greater difficulties in a field of knowledge in which, from the ignorance of those about him in the graphic art, he seemed to stand alone. From these attempts he proceeded to draw likenesses of the friends and relatives of his family with tolerable success. Richardson's Theory of Painting was now put into his hands, where he saw the enthusiastic raptures in which a great painter is described; and it is no wonder that he thought Raffaele (as he himself has said) the most extraordinary man the world had ever produced. His mind thus stimulated by a high example, and constantly ruminating upon it, the thought of remaining in hopeless obscurity became insupportable to him. It was this feeling which more and more excited his efforts, and in the end produced those works which have established his reputation on a lasting basis.* It should be

* Dr. Johnson, in his Life of Cowley, says that, "in the windows of his mother's apartment, (Cowley's) lay Spenser's Fairy Queen, in which he very early took delight to read, till, by feeling the charms of verse, he became, as he relates, irrecoverably a poet. Such are the accidents which, sometimes remembered, and perhaps sometimes forgotten, produce that particular designation of mind, and propensity for some certain science or employment, which is commonly called genius. The true genius is a mind of large general powers, accidentally determined to some particular direction. Sir Joshua Reynolds, the great painter of the present age, had the first fondness for his art excited by the perusal of Richardson's Treatise."

remembered, that at the time he read Richardson's Treatise, he could know nothing of Raffaele but from the praise bestowed upon him; mere verbal criticism could evidently give him little insight into the particular beauties or genius of Raffaele as a painter: but the enthusiastic admiration of the writer kindled a spark of the same generous flame in his own breast, and urged him to pursue the same path of glory, because it was the first that opened itself to his view.

I have ventured to deliver these opinions the more freely, because I know them to have been his own; and that, if they are not received as the truth, no one has ever yet been able to prove that they are false. Reynolds's notions on this subject have, notwithstanding, been sometimes mistaken, and his reasonings have been therefore charged with inconsistency. He never meant to deny the existence of genius, as this term denotes a greater degree of natural capacity in some minds than others; but he always contended strenuously against the vulgar and absurd interpretation of the word, which supposes that the same person may be a man of genius in one respect, but utterly unfit for, and almost an idiot in, every thing else, and that this singular and unaccountable faculty is a gift born with us, which does not need the assistance of pains or culture, time or accident, to improve and perfect it.

1741.

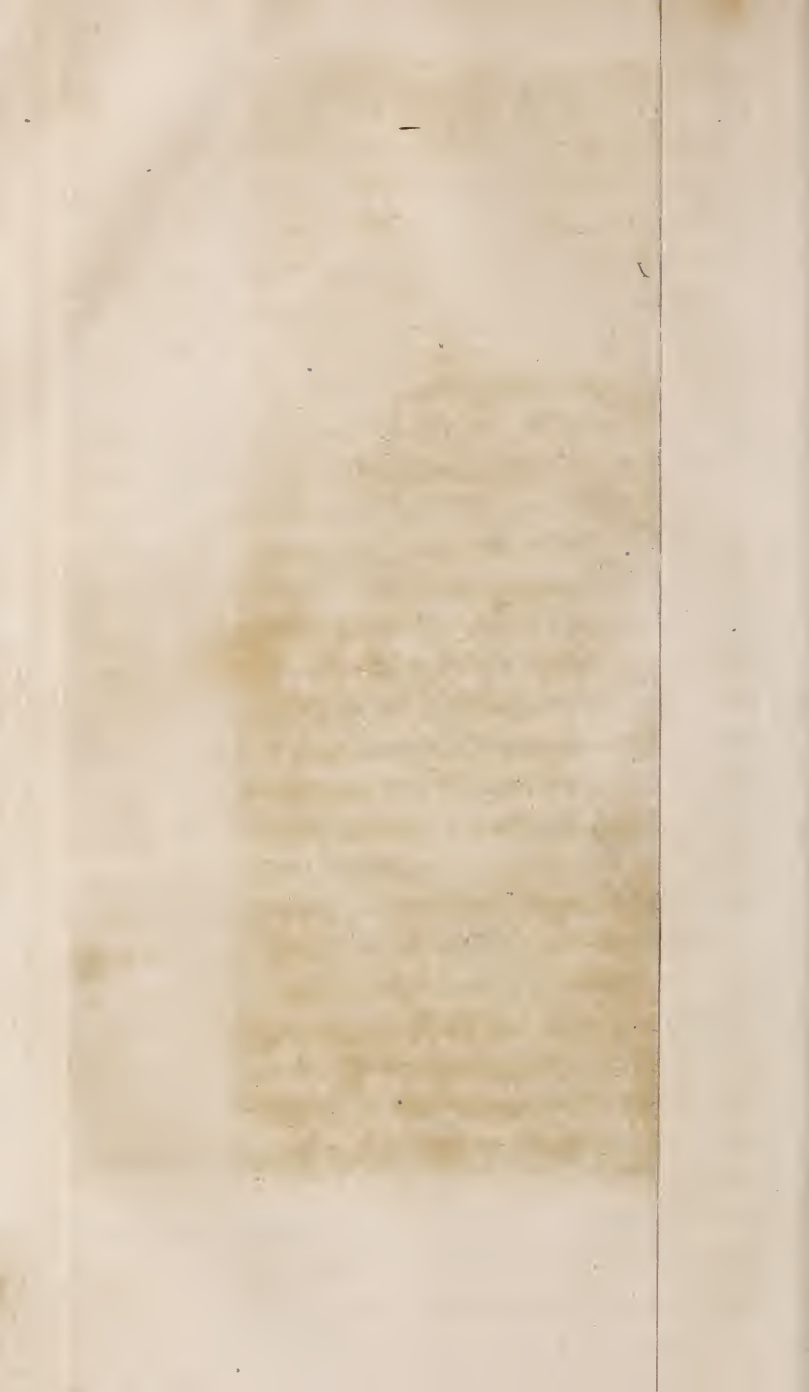
ÆTAT. 19.

As young Reynolds had shewn so early an inclination towards the arts, a neighbour and friend of the family (a Mr. Cranch) advised the father to send his son to London, to be placed under the tuition of Mr. Hudson, a well known painter of portraits, who was also a native of Devonshire. This advice was followed; and Hudson's consent being obtained, young Reynolds was sent to receive instruction from his preceptor: with this view he first visited the capital on the 14th of October, 1741, when he was not quite eighteen years of age; and on the 18th of that month, the day of St. Luke the patron of painters, was placed with his master.

In order to give the reader some idea of the state of the arts at that time, it must be observed that Hudson was then the greatest painter in England; and the qualification that enabled him to hold this decided pre-eminence, was the ability of producing a likeness with that kind of address which, by the vulgar, is considered as flattering to the person. But after having painted the head, Hudson's genius failed him, and he was obliged to apply to one Vanhaaken to put it on the shoulders and to finish the drapery, of both which he was himself totally incapable. Unluckily



*Plympton Grammar School,
Engraved by J. Storer from an Original Painting by Saml. Prout*



Vanhaaken died, and for a time Hudson was driven almost to despair, and feared he must have quitted his lucrative employment: he was, however, fortunate enough to meet with another drapery painter, named Roth, who, though not so expert as the former, was yet sufficiently qualified to carry on the manufactory.

But Reynolds always through life considered himself as particularly indebted to Mr. Cranch for the good advice by which his father was persuaded to send him to the metropolis. That gentleman possessed a small independent fortune, and resided at the town of Plympton, living long enough to be pleased by the justification of his early opinions respecting Reynolds's future excellence; who, in grateful remembrance of that good opinion, many years afterwards had a silver cup made, for the purpose of presenting it to his judicious friend. However, before that could take place, Mr. Cranch's death prevented this act of gratitude; but I have often seen the cup at Sir Joshua's table.

That the state of the arts, at Reynolds's first arrival in London, was despicable, is allowed; though one or two exceptions were beginning to appear: and Hogarth seems to have been of opinion that Hudson was not the only painter of his time who was indebted to Vanhaaken for assistance in finishing portraits; for, on the death of this eminent drapery painter, he produced a ludicrous

caricature of Vanhaaken's funeral procession, containing a long train, composed of all the portrait painters of the metropolis as mourners, and overwhelmed with the deepest distress. The genius of Hogarth was too great, and his public employment too little, to require the assistance of a drapery painter, therefore he might safely point his satire at those who did.

Such were the barren sources of instruction, at the time when Reynolds first came to London to be inspired by the genius of Hudson! It should be remarked, however, of Hudson, that though not a good painter himself, yet out of his school were produced several very excellent ones, viz. Reynolds, Mortimer, and Wright of Derby, who at that time formed a matchless triumvirate.

Yet it appears that Hudson's instructions were evidently not of the first rate, nor his advice to his young pupil very judicious, when we find that, (probably from pure ignorance,) instead of directing him to study from the antique models, he recommended to him the careful copying of Guercino's drawings, thus trifling his time away; this instance serves to shew the deplorable state of the arts at that time in this country: however, the youthful and tractable pupil executed his task with such skill, that many of those early productions are now preserved in the cabinets of the curious in this kindom; most of which are actually considered as masterly originals by Guercino himself.

He could not escape, indeed, without the ordinary fate of excellence, that of exciting jealousy even in the breast of his maester; who, as it is related, having seen a head painted whilst he was yet a pupil, from an elderly female servant in the family, in which he discovered a taste superior to that of the painters of the day, foretold the future success of his pupil, but not without feeling, and afterwards displaying, in his behaviour towards his young rival, some strong symptoms of that ungenerous passion.

Soon after young Reynolds first came to London, he was sent by his master to make a purchase for him at a sale of pictures, and it being a collection of some consequence, the auction-room was uncommonly crowded. Reynolds was at the upper end of the room, near the auctioneer, when he perceived a considerable bustle at the farther part of the room, near the door, which he could not account for, and at first thought somebody had fainted, as the crowd and heat were so great. However he soon heard the name of "Mr. Pope, Mr. Pope," whispered from every mouth, for it was Mr. Pope himself who then entered the room. Immediately every person drew back to make a free passage for the distinguished poet, and all those on each side held out their hands for him to touch as he passed; Reynolds, although not in the front row, put out his hand also, under the arm of the person who stood before him, and Pope took

hold of his hand, as he likewise did to all as he passed. This was the only time that Reynolds ever saw that great moralist.—Pity that Pope had not known the future importance of the hand he then received in his own!*

The above anecdote I heard from Sir Joshua himself.

1743.

ÆTAT. 19.

REYNOLDS continued only two years with his master, in which time he made so rapid a progress, that the picture of his painting, already noticed, having been accidentally seen in Hudson's gallery, it obtained so universal a preference that the preceptor immediately grew doubly jealous of his pupil's excellence, and on that account they soon afterwards parted. Reynolds returned to Devonshire, where he is said, by his biographer, to have dissipated the three following years, making little effort and as little improvement, to the great disquiet of his conscience afterwards. Yet it is well known that, during the period here spoken of, he produced a great many portraits, particularly one

* Early anecdotes of Reynolds at that period, cannot be very numerous, or very interesting; but, in recording this respecting Pope, I have done it as an instance to shew the high respect that was paid to the poet whilst living, and also with what reverence young Reynolds beheld genius, whether poetical or graphic.

of a boy reading by a reflected light,* and several others which are undoubtedly very fine, as he himself acknowledged on seeing them at the distance of thirty years ; when he lamented that in so great a length of time he had made so little progress in his art. If it be true, therefore, that he really lamented his loss of time in that interval, it arose most probably from a regret that he had not sooner established himself in London, which he always considered as the proper field for the display of talents : and it was, besides, his early and fixed opinion, which might add to his uneasiness on this subject, that if he did not prove himself the best painter of his time, when arrived at the age of thirty, he never should. At the period thus fixed upon by himself, there can be little doubt that he had, at least, surpassed all his competitors. At that interval of supposed negligence, I apprehend he was still making his observations on what he saw, and forming his taste ; and although there were but few works of art, as I have before noticed, within his reach in that county, still there were the works of one artist, who, notwithstanding he was never known beyond the boundary of the county in which he lived and died, was yet a man of first rate abilities ; and I have heard Reynolds himself

* This painting, fifty years afterwards, was sold by auction for thirty-five guineas. Some portraits of the noble family of Abercorn are also very correctly stated to have brought him into considerable notice at the above period.

speak of this painter's portraits, which are to be found only in Devonshire, with the highest respect: he not only much admired his talents as an artist, but in all his early practice evidently adopted his manner in regard to painting the head, and retained it in some degree ever after.

This painter was William Gandy of Exeter, whom I cannot but consider as an early master to Reynolds. The paintings of Gandy were, in all probability, the first good portraits that had come to his knowledge previous to his going to London; and he told me himself, that *he had seen* portraits by Gandy that were equal to those of Rembrandt, one, in particular, of an alderman of Exeter, which is placed in a public building in that city. I have also heard him repeat some observations of Gandy's that had been mentioned to him, and of which he approved; one in particular was, that a picture ought to have a richness in its texture, as if the colours had been composed of cream or cheese, and the reverse to a hard and husky or dry manner.*

1746.

ÆTAT. 22.

MR. REYNOLDS and his two youngest unmarried sisters had now taken a house at the town of Ply-

* At the end of this Memoir will be found some biographical notices of William Gandy.

mouth Dock, in which he occupied the first floor, and painted various portraits, some of which evince great capacity, although necessarily embarrassed by the want of practice and executive power. That of himself from which the print was taken, accompanying this work, was executed at this period.

Reynolds during his residence at Plymouth Dock, though he met, even there, with considerable employment, seems not to have invariably exhibited striking symptoms of his future excellence; indeed, a few of his early productions are but indifferent, being carelessly drawn, and frequently in common place attitudes, like those of his old master Hudson, with one hand hid in the waistcoat, and the hat under the arm; a very favourite attitude with portrait painters, at that time, because particularly convenient to the artist, as by it he got rid of the tremendous difficulty of painting the hand. But one gentleman, whose portrait Reynolds painted, desired to have his hat on his head, in the picture, which was quickly finished, in a common place attitude, done without much study, and sent home; where, on inspection, it was soon discovered, that although this gentleman, in his portrait, had one hat upon his head, yet there was another under his arm. This picture I never saw; but I have heard the anecdote so often repeated, and from such authority, that I apprehend it to be a truth.

It was at this period that he painted a portrait of Miss Chudleigh, afterwards Duchess of Kingston, who was then on a visit at Saltram, near Plymouth, the seat of J. Parker, esq. where he executed the picture; and I have heard him say, that Miss Chudleigh, at that period, was eminently beautiful, and possessed the most delicate person he had ever seen, though afterwards she grew extremely large and coarse.

He now began to be employed, much to his satisfaction; as by a letter which, at the time, he sent to his father who resided at Plympton, he acquaints him with some degree of exultation, that he had painted the portrait of the greatest man in the place—and this was the commissioner of Plymouth Dock-yard.

Soon after this he lost his father, who died on Christmas-day, 1746. This gentleman, the Rev. Samuel Reynolds, as has been before observed, was eminent for his learning and moral character, to which he united such innocence of heart and simplicity of manners, that he has often been mentioned as another parson Adams. He was also what is called an absent man. The following instance was related by an intimate friend of his as occurring on a visit which the old gentleman once made him at his house, about three miles from Plympton, the place of his own residence.

When old Mr. Reynolds set out from his home on horse-back, he rode in a pair of gambados, that

is, a large pair of boots of a peculiar make, very heavy, and open at the outside, so as easily to admit the legs of the rider, and which were thus attached to the saddle. When the old gentleman arrived at his friend's house, it was observed to him that he had only one gambado: "Bless me!" said he, "it is very true, but I am sure that I had them both when I set out from home;" and so it proved to be, as the lost gambado was afterwards found on the road, having dropped from the saddle and his leg without his perceiving the loss of it. It has been also said, that he was somewhat remarkable for his taciturnity. His wife's name, as I have already mentioned, was Theophila, and thence, in order to avoid superfluous words and questions, whenever he would choose to drink tea or coffee, he told her, "When I say *The*, you must make tea; but when I say *Offy*, you must make coffee." This, however, if it did take place, must have been merely a jest upon his own harmless foible.

1749.

ÆTAT. 25.

It may seem unlikely that the early success of Reynolds should, in any measure, have been connected with the politics of the times; yet nothing is more true, for notwithstanding his own wishes to visit Italy, the mother and nurse of the arts, still that event might not so soon have taken place, had

it not been for some occurrences, which, being so considerably instrumental to the gratification of his desire, even thence possess sufficient importance to be recorded here, as well as from their relating to the earliest and most firm friend Mr. Reynolds ever had.

During his residence at Plymouth he first became known to the family of Mount Edgcumbe; who warmly patronized him, and not only employed him in his profession, but also strongly recommended him to the Honourable Augustus Keppel, then a captain in the navy, and afterwards Viscount Keppel.

This officer not having been paid off at the peace of Aix la Chapelle, which took place in 1749, was now about to be employed on a service in which all the characteristic qualities of his mind were, for the first time, eminently called forth. He had indeed long distinguished himself, as well by his spirited activity as by his agreeable and accommodating manners, and at the same time, although still a very young man, displaying the greatest firmness when either his own or his country's honour was at hazard.

At this period the long warfare, in which almost all Europe had been engaged, had given opportunities to the commanders of the various Barbary Corsairs to renew their depredations on the neighbouring states, and that too without paying attention to the protection of any flag whatsoever.

Some of these depredations had even been committed on the English flag, which were in some measure submitted to; for though these states were then well known to be neither powerful nor rich, rendering it thereby easy to compel a cessation of hostilities, or to purchase an alliance, yet it had been our policy to consider it as not very safe or prudent, either to shew to an indigent race of barbarous pirates that they had it in their power to exact tribute from a warlike nation like Great Britain, or to engage in war with a people who might, in some measure, be even protected by their very weakness,—a people upon whom no reprisals could be made, and whose armaments, such as they were, could be renewed, as often as they were annihilated, with much less inconvenience than we must have suffered in destroying them.

Under these circumstances the Corsairs continued, during the early part of 1749, to infest the seas and coasts of the Mediterranean; when the Pope* ordered out all his gallies under Monsieur de Bussy, to put a stop to their insults, if possible. The Genoese too, once so powerful as a maritime nation, were now actually unable to oppose those barbarians at sea, and were reduced to the prudential measure of merely placing guards along their coast, in order to prevent their landing, as they had done in several other places, committing the

* Benedict XIV, Lambertini.

greatest devastation. They were, at length, however, able to furnish three gallies, which they fitted out and sent to join a force collected at the particular instance of his Holiness, consisting of four gallies armed by himself, and two ships of war contributed by the Grand Master of Malta, with two xebecs and four large settees from some of the other powers.

Instead, however, of exerting themselves in defence of Christendom, this armament permitted eleven Algerine ships to alarm the whole coast of Naples, where they had proceeded in hopes of seizing the king whilst he was employed in pheasant-shooting in the island of Procida; a design, indeed, in which they were frustrated, though their insolence was now raised to such a pitch, through impunity, that they became totally regardless of all treaties, and pushed some of their cruizers into the Atlantic in order to capture British vessels.

On the 7th of May 1749, the Prince Frederick packet-boat arrived at Falmouth, having sailed from Lisbon for that port upwards of two months before, but had been captured by four Algerine Corsairs who had carried her into port, where they detained her twenty-three days, on pretence that the captain named in the commission was not on board, and that the money and jewels of which they plundered her, were the property of Jews. They treated the crew, however, civilly,

and did not rob them; and at length permitted the vessel to return home. At this period Mr. Keppel was fitting out at Plymouth Dock, in order to proceed to the Mediterranean station as commodore; and Mr. Reynolds gladly accepted of an earnest invitation to accompany him during part of the voyage.

Orders were instantly given by the Admiralty for fitting out a squadron, consisting of the Centurion, Assurance, Unicorn, and Sea-horse; in the first of which the Commodore was to hoist his broad pendant. It was intended also that this squadron should not only carry out presents for the Dey of Algiers, but that the commodore should also be empowered to demand restitution of the money plundered out of the Prince Frederic.

As the equipment of the squadron, however, and the preparations of the presents, were likely to occupy some time, the Commodore had orders to proceed immediately to sea in his own ship, the Centurion, and accordingly he sailed, accompanied by Mr. Reynolds, on the 11th of May, 1749.

After a passage rather tedious in point of time, they arrived at Lisbon on the 24th of that month, where our young painter saw several grand religious processions and other ceremonies novel to him, and which he notices in his memorandums. After a short stay at Lisbon, they proceeded to-

wards Gibraltar, where they arrived on the 9th of June, and after a few weeks got under weigh for Algiers, in order to execute the Commodore's commission. There they arrived on the 20th of July, and Mr. Reynolds accompanied the Commodore in his visit of state, when he had an opportunity of being introduced to the Dey in the usual form; but the most friendly assurances being held out, Commodore Keppel thought it unnecessary to make any longer stay, and immediately sailed for Port Mahon, in the island of Minorca, at which place Mr. Reynolds went on shore to live on the 23rd of August.

Here the friendship of the Commodore, as well as his own merit, soon introduced him to notice, and he was employed busily in painting the portraits of almost all the officers in the garrison and on the station, greatly to the improvement of his skill and fortune.

To General Blakeney, the governor, he was much indebted for polite attention; as that gentleman not only insisted on his being at no expense during his stay on the island for quarters, but also pressed him to a constant seat at his own table.

His stay at Port Mahon was however prolonged considerably beyond his original intention, by an unpleasant and indeed very dangerous accident; his horse having fallen down a precipice, by which his face was so much cut as to confine him to his room. At this time it was, I believe, that his lip

was so much bruised as to oblige him to have part of it cut off; from whence arose that apparent contraction which Mr. Edwards supposes to have been owing to his subsequent illness at Rome, which brought on his partial deafness.

His recovery now enabled him to pursue his original plan, and he for a time took leave of his friend, who had been literally so during the whole course of the voyage, treating him in all respects as a brother, affording him the liberal use of his cabin and library, and introducing him, when in port, to the first circles in which he associated.

1750.

ÆTAT. 26.

BEFORE we follow Mr. Reynolds to Italy, it will not be irrelevant to notice a subsequent anecdote of his friend the Commodore, who, in the course of the ensuing year, found it necessary to return to Algiers, in consequence of the renewed depredations of the corsairs. Having proceeded with his squadron to that place, he anchored in the bay, directly opposite to, and within gun-shot of, the palace, and then went on shore, accompanied by his captain, and attended only by his barge's crew. On his arrival at the palace, he demanded an audience, and on his admission to the Divan, laid open his embassy, requiring, at the same time, in the name of his sovereign, ample

satisfaction for the various injuries done to the British nation.

Surprised at the boldness of his remonstrances, and enraged at his demands of justice, the Dey, despising his apparent youth, for he was then only four and twenty, exclaimed, that he wondered at the insolence of the King of Great Britain in sending him an insignificant beardless boy.

On this the youthful, but spirited, Commodore is said to have returned an answer in so determined and fearless a manner as to rouse all the passions of the tyrant,* who, unused to such language from the sycophants of his court, was so far enraged as to forget the law of nations in respect to ambassadors, and actually ordered his mutes to advance with the bow-string, at the same time telling the Commodore that his life should answer for his audacity.

The Commodore listened to this menace with the utmost calmness; and being near to a window which looked out upon the bay, directed the attention of the African chief to the squadron there at anchor, telling him, that if it was his pleasure to put him to death, there were Englishmen enough on board to make a glorious funeral pile.

* The answer is said to be thus: "That had his Majesty the King of Great Britain estimated the degree of wisdom by the length of the beard, he would have sent him a goat as an ambassador." Of the truth of this speech having been made, I am rather in doubt; but that he answered with great boldness is certain.

The Dey, having cooled a little at this hint, was wise enough to permit the Commodore to depart in safety, and also to make ample satisfaction for the damage already done, faithfully promising to abstain from violence in future.

To return to our subject—Mr. Reynolds now quitted Port Mahon, after a residence there of about two months, and proceeded for Leghorn, and from thence to Rome. When arrived in that garden of the world, that great temple of the arts, (where I have enjoyed so much pleasure, now almost fading from my memory,) his time was diligently and judiciously employed in such a manner as might have been expected from one of his talents and virtue. He contemplated, with unwearied attention and ardent zeal, the various beauties which marked the styles of different schools and different ages. He sought for truth, taste, and beauty, at the fountain head. It was with no common eye that he beheld the productions of the great masters. He copied and sketched, in the Vatican, such parts of the works of Raffaele and Michael Angelo as he thought would be most conducive to his future excellence; and by his well-directed study acquired, whilst he contemplated the best works of the best masters, that grace of thinking to which he was principally indebted for his subsequent reputation as a portrait painter. In attending more particularly to this,

he avoided all engagements for copying works of art, for the various travellers at that time in Rome: knowing that kind of employment, as he afterwards said in a letter to Barry, to be totally useless—"Whilst I was at Rome, I was very little employed by them, and that little I always considered as so much time lost."

Mr. Reynolds was too much occupied in his studies to dedicate much time to epistolary correspondence; but I think it not improper to insert here the following letter, as the first sketch of one he sent to his friend and patron Lord E., written with admirable simplicity of language, and rendered interesting from the elegant, grateful, and feeling mind it displays, as well as shewing the absurdity of imputing some *others* to his pen.

" TO THE RIGHT HONORABLE THE LORD EDGUMBE.

" MY LORD,

" I am now (thanks to your Lordship) at the height of my wishes, in the midst of the greatest works of art the world has produced. I had a very long passage, though a very pleasant one. I am at last in Rome, having seen many places and sights which I never thought of seeing. I have been at Lisbon, Cadiz, Gibraltar, Algiers, and Mahon. The Commodore staid at Lisbon a week, in which time there happened two of the greatest

sights that could be seen had he staid there a whole year—a bull feast, and the procession of *Corpus Christi*. Your Lordship will excuse me if I say, that from the kind treatment and great civilities I have received from the Commodore, I fear I have even laid your Lordship under obligations to him upon my account; since from nothing but your Lordship's recommendation I could possibly expect to meet with that polite behaviour with which I have always been treated: I had the use of his cabin and his study of books as if they had been my own; and when he went ashore, he generally took me with him; so that I not only had an opportunity of seeing a great deal, but I saw it with all the advantages as if I had travelled as his equal. At Cadiz I saw another bull feast. I ask your Lordship's pardon for being guilty of that usual piece of ill manners in speaking so much of myself; I should not have committed it after such favours. Impute my not writing to the true reason: I thought it impertinent to write to your Lordship without a proper reason; to let you know where I am, if your Lordship should have any commands here that I am capable of executing. Since I have been in Rome, I have been looking about the palaces for a fit picture of which I might take a copy to present your Lordship with; though it would have been much more genteel to have sent the picture without any previous intimation of it. Any one you choose,

the larger the better, as it will have a more grand effect when hung up, and a kind of painting I like more than little. Though it will be too great a presumption to expect it, I must needs own I most impatiently wait for this order from your Lordship.

“ I am, &c. &c.

“ JOSHUA REYNOLDS.”

Of other events, previous to his arrival at Rome, I have nothing to add; but, as a proof of his diligence whilst at that capital of the arts, I cannot omit giving a few of his observations, which I have seen in his hand-writing, apparently made on the spot, as remarks to refresh his memory, and promote improvement in his future practice: they may therefore be interesting to young artists.

He says—“ The Leda, in the Colonna Palace, by Corregio, is dead coloured white, and black or ultramarine in the shadows; and over that is scumbled, thinly and smooth, a warmer tint, I believe *caput mortuum*. The lights are mellow, the shadows bluish, but mellow. The picture is painted on a pannel, in a broad and large manner, but finished like an enamel; the shadows harmonize and are lost in the ground.

“ The *Ecce Homo* of Corregio, in the same palace. The shadows are entirely lost in the ground; perhaps more so by time than they were at first.

“ The Adonis of Titian, in the Colonna Palace, is dead coloured white, with the muscles marked bold: the second painting, he scumbled a light colour over it: the lights a mellow flesh colour; the shadows in the light parts of a faint purple hue; at least they were so at first. That purple hue seems to be occasioned by blackish shadows under, and the colour scumbled over them.

“ I copied the Titian in the Colonna collection with white, umber, minio, cinnabar, black; the shadows thin of colour.

“ In respect to painting the flesh tint, after it has been finished with very strong colours, such as ultramarine and carmine, pass white over it, very, very thin with oil. I believe it will have a wonderful effect.

“ Or paint the carnation too red, and then scumble it over with white and black.”

Then, he adds, “ Dead colour with white and black only; at the second sitting, carnation. (To wit, the Barocci in the palace Albani, and Corregio in the Pamphili.)

“ Poussin’s landscapes, in the Verospi palace, are painted on a dark ground, made of Indian red and black. The same ground might do for all other subjects as well as landscapes.

“ Make a finished sketch of every portrait you intend to paint, and by the help of that dispose your living model: then finish at the first time on a ground made of Indian red and black.”

It may be seen by those various schemes, to which Reynolds had recourse, how eager he was in the pursuit of excellence, and they may serve as a good example to beginners : again he remarks, that “all the shadows in the works of the Carracci, Guercino, as well as the Venetian school, are made with little colour, but much oil: the Venetians’ seem to be made only of a drying oil, composed of red lead and oil.

“In comparison with Titian and Paul Veronese, all the other Venetian masters appear hard; they have, in a degree, the manner of Rembrandt; all mezzotinto, occasioned by scumbling over their pictures with some dark oil or colour.*

“After a strict examination of the best pictures, the benefit to be derived from them, is to draw such conclusions as may serve in future as fixed rules of practice; taking care not to be amused with trifles, but to learn to regard the excellencies chiefly.

“There are some artists who are very diligent in examining pictures, and yet are not at all advanced in their judgment; although they can remember the exact colour of every figure, &c. in the picture: but not reflecting deeply on what they have seen, or making observations to themselves, they

* Titian, Paul Veronese, Tintoretto, Rubens, and Vandyke, have painted drapery admirably; and indeed the Lombard school have excelled in that and colouring, as the Romans have in design and nudity.

are not at all improved by the crowd of particulars that swim on the surface of their brains: as nothing enters deep enough into their minds to do them benefit through digestion.

“ A painter should form his rules from pictures, rather than from books or precepts ; this is having information at the first hand—at the fountain head. Rules were first made from pictures, not pictures from rules. The first compilers of rules for painting were in the situation in which it is most desirable a student should be. Thus every picture an artist sees, whether the most excellent or most ordinary, he should consider from whence that fine effect, or that ill effect, proceeds ; and then there is no picture, ever so indifferent, but he may look at to his profit.

“ The manner of the English travellers in general, and of those who most pique themselves on studying Vertu, is, that instead of examining the beauties of those works of fame, and why they are esteemed, they only enquire the subject of the picture and the name of the painter, the history of a statue, and where it was found, and write that down. Some Englishmen, while I was in the Vatican, came there, and spent above six hours in writing down whatever the antiquary dictated to them ; they scarcely ever looked at the paintings the whole time.”

He also made the following remarks on the character given of Apelles :—

“ It is a matter of dispute among painters, whether Apelles would be esteemed as a great painter were he now alive; the very argument I have heard urged against it is what persuades me he was a good painter; to wit, that he made use of but four colours.* A remark made by Pliny is, that he polished away, or varnished over his pictures, to take off their glaring effect, and to deaden the tints; but Pliny does not speak on this point like a painter: he observed, that the pictures of Apelles had not that raw and gaudy colouring like those of his cotemporaries, and therefore imagined it was occasioned by a varnish; but it was from his judicious breaking those colours to the standard of nature.

“ The ancient painters, I am fully persuaded, by many circumstances in the accounts given of them, painted in the great and true style: of this, the following anecdote, mentioned by Pliny, is a considerable confirmation.

“ A painter had executed a picture which he valued for what is alone truly valuable in painting, that is, character and expression. On its being exposed in public, he was mortified to find, amongst other commendations bestowed upon this picture, a partridge admired that he had painted in a corner of the picture, that it was so natural it looked to be alive—he defaced it entirely.

* It was always Reynolds's advice to his scholars to use as few colours as possible, as the only means of being most secure from becoming heavy or dirty in colouring.

“ The Italians, at present, in their historical pictures, do not attempt to paint the drapery to appear natural ; I believe for no other reason than because their masters before them did not ; for if they were guided by the same principle that influenced their great predecessors, they would likewise avoid the glaring colouring that at present they adopt, and attend more to a grand simplicity in all the other branches of the art.

“ When a true judge of art is wrapt in admiration on the intellectual excellencies of a picture, it is with pain that he hears a tame remark on the colouring, handling, &c. When, like St. Paul, he is by enthusiasm lifted up (if I may so say) to the third heaven, he is too high to observe the inferior parts—he gazes only on the whole together.

“ Suppose a person, while he is contemplating a capital picture by Raffaelle, or the Carracci, whilst he is wrapt in wonder at the sight of St. Paul preaching at Athens, and the various dispositions of his audience, or is struck with the distress of the mother in the Death of the Innocents, or with tears in his eyes beholds the dead Christ of Carracci, would it not offend him to have his attention called off to observe a piece of drapery in the picture naturally represented ?

“ Raffaelle had the true spirit and fire of his art ; all his figures seem to be really and unaffectedly intently occupied according to their intended destinations. This is the proper spirit of

Raffaelle; instead of which, we find in most other painters, ridiculous contortions of body, actions that we never saw in nature, that, as Shakespear humorously expresses it, ‘One would think that some of Nature’s journeymen had made them, they imitate humanity so abominably.’

“We find Raffaelle, in his works, sometimes possessed as it were with the very soul and spirit of Michael Angelo, and perceive that it is from him he received his inspiration; witness his God the Father dividing Light from Darkness, and Elias lifted up to Heaven. Raffaelle despised himself when he saw the Capella Sistina of Michael Angelo, and resolved to alter his own style entirely; and there is as great a difference between the Heliodorus and his other paintings in the Vatican, as there is between the Greek and the Roman sculpture.

“Sometimes a painter, by seeking for attitudes too much, becomes cold and insipid. This is generally the case with those who would have every figure a fine action; they lose sight of nature, and become uninteresting and cold.

“Another general fault is that which the French are commonly guilty of, seeking after what they call *spirit and fire*, and thus outstrip the modesty of nature, when their subject requires no such fire, or perhaps quite the contrary; however, they learnt it of him whom they esteem as perfection itself—that was their master!”

I cannot agree altogether with Reynolds in loading the fame of Raffaelle with so enormous a debt to Michael Angelo. Raffaelle improved himself very much by seeing the works of Leonardo da Vinci and Fra. Bartolomeo ; but the true attributes of Raffaelle, and by which he gains his highest fame, are wholly his own ; and had he possessed nothing more than what he gained from either Leonardo da Vinci, Fra. Bartolomeo, or Michael Angelo, we should not at this time have held his great name in reverence.

Of the portrait of Pope Innocent the Tenth in the Pamphili palace at Rome, painted by Velasquez, he used to say, that in his opinion it was the finest portrait in the world.

There is now in Rome an extraordinary fine portrait of Reynolds, painted by himself when in his studies in that city, and left by him in the house where he lodged at that time.

1751.

ÆTAT. 27.

WHILST Mr. Reynolds was pursuing his studies at Rome, several other English artists were there, to the same intent ; particularly Mr. John Astley, who had been his fellow pupil in the school of Hudson, and of whom Reynolds used to say, that Astley would rather run three miles to deliver his message by word of mouth than venture to write

a note. Probably his education had been neglected ; however, he afterwards became a very rich man by an advantageous marriage which he contracted with a wealthy lady of quality. The observation of his biographer on this event is, that Astley owed his fortune to his form ; his follies to his fortune : indeed, at the period of his life I now allude to, he was as poor in purse, as he ever was as an artist.

It was an usual custom with the English painters at Rome to meet in the evenings for conversation, and frequently to make little excursions together in the country. On one of those occasions, on a summer afternoon, when the season was particularly hot, the whole company threw off their coats, as being an incumbrance to them, except poor Astley, who alone shewed great reluctance to follow this general example ; this seemed very unaccountable to his companions, when some jokes, made on his singularity, at last obliged him to take his coat off also. The mystery was then immediately explained ; for it appeared, that the hinder part of his waistcoat was made, by way of thriftiness, out of one of his own pictures, and thus displayed a tremendous waterfall on his back, to the great diversion of the spectators.

Reynolds has himself ingenuously confessed, in his writings, that at the first sight of Raffaele's works in the Vatican, to his great disappointment,

he did not relish, or well comprehend their merits, but that he studied them till he did.

Perhaps we may account for this circumstance from the difference in the dispositions of the two painters : Raffaelle possessed a grandeur even to severity ; and did not display in his pictures either the allurements of colour, or any great effect of light and shade ; parts of the art which delighted Reynolds, whose natural disposition inclined him solely to the cultivation of its graces, and of whose works, softness and captivating sweetness are the chief characteristics.

After Reynolds had discovered the excellencies of Raffaelle, he very judiciously made several studies rather than copies from the most striking heads in the Vatican, such as more particularly contained powerful hints to assist him in his future practice, even in portrait, in respect to simplicity, dignity, character, expression, and drawing.

Several of those heads are now in my possession.

It is a curious circumstance, and scarcely to be credited in the life of an artist so refined, who seems, even from the earliest dawning of his genius, to have devoted himself to the service of the graces, that he should ever have been, at any period, a caricaturist. Yet this was actually the case during his residence at Rome, where he painted several pictures of that kind : particularly one, which is a sort of parody on Raf-

faelle's School of Athens, comprising about thirty figures and representing most of the English gentlemen then in that city; this picture, I have been informed, is now in the possession of Mr. Joseph Henry, of Straffan, in Ireland, whose portrait also it contains. But I have heard Reynolds himself say, that although it was universally allowed he executed subjects of this kind with much humour and spirit, he yet held it absolutely necessary to abandon the practice; since it must corrupt his taste as a portrait painter, whose duty it becomes to aim at discovering the perfections only of those whom he is to represent.

The treasures of art in the city of Rome, although so captivating to Reynolds, he at length thought it prudent to quit, in order to have the more time to inspect the various other schools of Italy, particularly those of Bologna and Genoa, before he took his final farewell of that delightful country; I must not omit, in this place, therefore, to insert the memoranda from his journal of what he saw at the latter city. He says—

“ In the Palazzo Durazzo, I saw a most admirable portrait of a man by Rembrandt, his hands one in the other; a prodigious force of colouring.

“ But the picture which should be first mentioned is very large, and the most capital one I have seen by Paul Veronese, of Mary Magdalen washing the feet of Christ, containing about ten figures as large as life, admirably finished.

“ Three large pictures by Luca Jordano, the best likewise of that master ; figures the size of life ; to wit—

“ Seneca going into the bath ;

“ A subject from Tasso’s Jerusalem ; a man and woman going to be burned at a stake ;

“ A Perseus shewing Medusa’s head ; many figures, some of which appear to be turned to stone.

“ In the gallery are a great number of statues ; I think the one considered the best is that of Mercury.

“ A picture of St. Stephen stoned ; said to be by Raffaelle.

“ Palazzo of the Prince Doria. A magnificent fountain in the middle of the garden, representing Neptune drawn by sea-horses.

“ This palace is uninhabited, so that scarcely any thing remains worth seeing, but such works of art as they could not remove ; which are ceilings, and some of the walls painted by Perino del Vaga.

“ Palazzo Brignoli. A crucifix of white marble in a niche ; a real light, within the niche, comes from above, which has a fine effect.

“ In the Palazzo Balbi, in Strada Balbi, are good pictures.”

From a variety of observations on other places, I shall here give one respecting the cupola of the cathedral of Parma, of which he says—

“ Relieve the light part of the picture with a

dark ground, or the dark part with a light ground, whichever will have the most agreeable effect, or make the best mass. The cupola of Parma has the dark objects relieved, and the lights scarcely distinguishable from the ground. Some whole figures are considered as shadows; all the lights are of one colour. It is in the shadows only that the colours vary. In general, all the shadows should be of one colour, and the lights only to be distinguished by different tints; at least it should be so when the back ground is dark in the picture."

At Florence, Reynolds spent only two months; and at Venice he made a still shorter stay—I think not more than six weeks—yet it is that school which seems most powerfully to have influenced the professional conduct of his life.

I cannot here refrain from recording a little circumstance as related by himself, which occurred during the time he was studying at Venice. Being one night at the opera, the manager of the house ordered the band to play an English ballad tune as a compliment to the English gentlemen then residing in that city. This happened to be the popular air which was played or sung in almost every street in London just at their time of leaving it; by suggesting to them that metropolis, with all its connexions and endearing circumstances, it immediately brought tears into our young painter's eyes, as well as into those of his countrymen who were present.

Thus nature will prevail, and Paul Veronese, Tintoret, and even Titian, were all given up at the moment, from the delightful prospect of again returning to his native land after an absence of near three years.

1752.

ÆTAT. 28.

MR. REYNOLDS, having thus with great assiduity sufficiently qualified himself in his profession by his tour of Italy, in which time he visited most of the principal cities of that country, set out on his return to England by the way of France, and took the road over Mount Cenis, upon which mountain he very unexpectedly met with his old master, Hudson, in company with Roubiliac the famous sculptor; both going to pay a short visit to Rome.

Of Roubiliac it is a pleasing circumstance to record, that his own goodness of heart first brought his excellent abilities into notice, and that his great success in life seems to have depended, in some degree, on his honest and liberal conduct soon after he came to England. At that time he was merely working as a journeyman for a person of the name of Carter, and the young artist having spent an evening at Vauxhall, on his return picked up a pocket-book, which he discovered, on examining it at his lodgings, to contain a considerable

number of Bank notes, together with some papers apparently of consequence to the owner. He immediately advertised the circumstance, and a claimant soon appeared, who was so pleased with the integrity of the youth, and so struck with his genius, of which he shewed several specimens, that he not only, being a man of rank and fortune, gave him a handsome remuneration, but also promised to patronize him through life, and faithfully performed that promise.

On the arrival of Mr. Reynolds at Paris he met his friend Mr. Chambers, the architect (afterwards Sir William), accompanied by his wife, then also on their way to Rome; and whilst there, he painted the portrait of Mrs. Chambers, which has since been copied in mezzotinto.* With this eminent architect, indeed, he long continued in habits of intimacy, respecting him as an instance of genius rising in opposition to circumstance.

As Mr. Chambers was one of Reynolds's most intimate friends, also one of the founders of the Royal Academy, an eminent British Artist, and one whose name will often occur in the course of this memoir, it is proper to introduce him to the reader with a slight sketch of the leading circumstances of his life.

* This portrait is painted with a hat on the head, which throws a shadow over part of the face; a sky behind with a light breaking through the clouds. Mrs. Chambers was at that time very handsome, and the picture is very excellent.

Mr. Chambers, it is pretty generally known, was, though a Swede by birth, a Briton by descent, having sprung from the ancient family of Chalmers in Scotland, who were also barons of Tartas in France: his father was a merchant, and had suffered much in his fortune by supplying Charles the Twelfth with money and goods during his campaigns, for which he received nothing more than the base copper coin of that mad monarch, struck for the purpose in his various emergencies, and which becoming soon depreciated, the generous and confiding merchant was involved in ruin.

At the early age of two years, Sir William was brought to England and placed at Rippon school, in Yorkshire, after leaving which he was appointed to a situation under the India Company, which carried him to China: he then returned to London, and soon displayed those talents for architecture which introduced him to the notice of the Earl of Bute, who immediately appointed him drawing master to his present Majesty; a situation partly held also by Goupy. In consequence of this connection he soon had the management of the gardens at Kew.

Sir William Chambers's works in architecture are numerous in England, Scotland, and Ireland; but the principal and best of them is Somerset Place, commenced by him in the year 1776, (but not yet fully completed,) under his immediate and constant inspection, according to his original de-

signs. Of his writings, the principal ones are—“A Treatise on Civil Architecture,” which has gone through three editions—“A Dissertation on Oriental Gardening,” which has gone through two, and has been elegantly translated into French, by Monsieur de la Rochet, with Chetqua’s Explanatory Discourse, in defence of that work.

After parting with his friends at Paris, Mr. Reynolds proceeded for the British metropolis, and on his arrival in England, which took place in the month of October, 1752, he found his health in such an indifferent state, as to judge it prudent to pay a visit to his native air. He accordingly set off immediately for Plymouth, and during his visit to that town, painted the portrait of his friend Dr. John Mudge, a remarkable fine head, of which there is also a print.* From this time, a warm, disinterested, and reciprocal friendship subsisted between this truly respectable family of the Mudges and Mr. Reynolds, who always held them in the highest esteem, and the friendly connection between them was kept up to the latest period of his life.

This portrait, and one other of a young lady, were all that he undertook whilst at Plymouth, being strongly urged by his friend Lord Edgcumbe to return, as soon as possible, to the metropolis, as the only place where his fame could be esta-

* His price was then five guineas for a head portrait.

blished and his fortune advanced ; in consequence of which advice, as soon as his health permitted, he set off for London, and engaged handsome apartments in St. Martin's lane, at that time the favorite and fashionable residence of artists, about the end of the year 1752.

At this period, as it is recorded of him, the earliest specimen he gave of his improvement in the art, was the head of a boy in a Turkish turban, richly painted, something in the style of Rembrandt ; which being much talked of, induced his old master, Hudson, to pay him a visit, when it so much attracted his attention, that he called every day to see it in its progress, and perceiving at last no trace of his own manner left, he exclaimed, " By G—, Reynolds, you don't paint so well as when you left England ! "

This little anecdote, however, we must consider as a jest upon Hudson by some of his contemporaries, or else it would seem that he had improved but little in taste during his Italian tour, in his progress to which Mr. Reynolds had met him, but the year before, upon Mount Cenis.

Soon after the return of Reynolds to his native land, the boldness of his youthful attempts, and the novelty of his style, totally confounded all the old painters of that time, who had not yet given up the adoration to their idol, the late Sir Godfrey Kneller ; and as no genius in art had appeared in England from the period of Kneller's death, they

were not prepared to worship any other, or even to countenance any one guilty of the heresy of differing in practice from him whom they held to be absolute perfection in his line. The following anecdote will serve to corroborate the foregoing remark:—Ellis, an eminent painter of that time, was one of the few remaining artists of the school of Kneller, when Reynolds began to be known and to introduce a style entirely new. Having heard of the well-known picture of the Turkish boy, he called on Reynolds in order to see it; and perceiving his mode of painting to be very unlike the manner to which he himself had always been accustomed, and indeed unlike any thing he had ever seen before, he was as much astonished as Hudson is said to have been, and, like him, exclaimed—“ Ah! Reynolds, this will never answer:—why, you don't paint in the least degree in the manner of Kneller:” but when Reynolds began to expostulate, and to vindicate himself, Ellis, feeling himself unable to give any good reason for the objection he had advanced, cried out in a great rage—“ Shakespeare in poetry, and Kneller in painting, damme!” and immediately ran out of the room.

I have also heard Reynolds say, that, at the time when he began his career in life as a painter, the admiration of the works of Sir Godfrey Kneller was so prevalent in England, that, had any person ventured to name those of Vandyke in competition with them, the painters then living would

have laughed him to scorn, as having advanced the greatest absurdity. This instance serves to prove the power of prejudice and fashion, which we often see so abundantly contribute to prop up and exalt the lauded idol of the day.

The prepossession of the English nation in favour of Kneller and Lely, which Reynolds had to combat in the commencement of his career, raised an over-violent prejudice in his breast against those painters, and it continued to the end of his life. In one place he thus describes the artists of his early days:—

“ Most of our portrait painters fall into one general fault. They have got a set of postures, which they apply to all persons indiscriminately; the consequence of which is, that all their pictures look like so many sign-post paintings; and if they have a history or a family-piece to paint, the first thing they do is to look over their commonplace book, containing sketches which they have stolen from various pictures; then they search their prints over, and pilfer one figure from one print, and another from a second, but never take the trouble of thinking for themselves: on the contrary, the painter who has a genius, first makes himself master of the subject he is to represent, by reading, or otherwise; then works his imagination up to a kind of enthusiasm, till he in a degree perceives the whole event, as it were, before his eyes, when, as quick as lightning, he gives

his rough sketch on paper or canvas. By this means, his work has the air of genius stamped upon it; whilst the contrary mode of practice will infallibly be productive of tameness, and of such pictures as will have the semblance of copies. After the painter has made his sketch from his idea only, he may be allowed to look at the works of his predecessors for dresses, ornaments, &c., of the times he intends to represent.

“Every man is a painter for himself; whenever he hears or reads any remarkable event, he forms to himself the looks, actions, and even the ground on which it was transacted. The painter has nothing to do, but to copy those images on canvas which he has in his mind’s eye.”

“Suidas says that Phidias and Zeuxis were both of them transported by the same enthusiasm that gave life to all their works.”

In some observations on the French painters of that day, Reynolds said—“The French cannot boast of above one painter of a truly just and correct taste, free of any mixture of affectation or bombast, and he was always proud to own from what models he had formed his style;—to wit, Raffaele and the antique. But all the others of that nation seem to have taken their ideas of grandeur from romances, instead of the Roman or Grecian histories. Thus their heroes are decked out so nice and so fine, that they look like knights-errant just entering the lists at a tournament in gilt armour, and

loaded most unmercifully with silk, satin, velvet, gold, jewels, &c., and hold up their heads and carry themselves with an air like a *petit-maitre* with his dancing-master at his elbow: thus corrupting the true taste, and leading it astray from the pure, the simple, and grand style, by a mock majesty and false magnificence. Even the rude uncultivated manner of Caravaggio is still a better extreme than those affected turns of the head, fluttering draperies, contrasts of attitude, and distortions of passion.”

The first pupil Mr. Reynolds had under his care was Giuseppe Marchi, a young Italian whom he brought with him from Rome, the place of his birth. He continued with him the principal part of his life, and assisted him in making his copies, in sitting for attitudes for his portraits, and in partly painting his draperies. In the latter part of his time he had a salary from Reynolds, I think about a hundred per year, together with his board and lodging; but left him many years before his death, and went to Swansea in Wales, where he practised as a portrait painter. Some time after, he returned again to London, and to Reynolds, with whom he continued till the death of the latter; after which, he completed, as well as he was able, several pictures which Reynolds had left unfinished.

The picture mentioned above of a boy in a Turk-

ish habit, was painted from this Giuseppe Marchi, by Reynolds soon after they came to England, and is a great likeness: there is a mezzotinto print taken from it. Marchi* sometimes scraped in mezzotinto himself, and there are several plates done by him from the paintings of Reynolds. He died in London, April 2, 1808, aged 73 years.

1753.

ÆTAT. 29.

IN 1753, the artists began to exert themselves to give some kind of public eclat to their profession, and an Academy of Arts was proposed to be instituted. For this purpose a meeting was called by circular letter,† in order to adopt the first principles for its foundation; but some jealousies and disagreements prevented any thing being done. Indeed, certain invidious persons were so anxious to thwart every thing connected with the improvement of the national taste, that they even descended to treat this as a subject fit for caricature, and published some satirical prints, in which they attempted to point ridicule at the most active friends to the measure. These prints, however, if they had any effect at the time, are now sunk in oblivion, and are no where to be found.

* His proper name was Guiseppe Philippo Liberati Marchi.

† Dated October 23.

It was about the year 1753 that Mr. Reynolds so much distinguished himself by some of his most admired portraits: and he now found his prospects so bright and extensive, that he removed to a large house on the north side of Great Newport-street, where he afterwards resided for eight or nine years.

This period was the dawn of his splendour; for his amiable modesty, accompanied by his extraordinary talents, soon gained him powerful and active connections: even his earliest sitters were of the highest rank; the second portrait which he painted in London being that of the old Duke of Devonshire. Yet Mr. Reynolds, notwithstanding this auspicious commencement of his career in London, seems to have been annoyed by the great celebrity of a very mean competitor, but who, at that time was the pink of fashion. This was John Stephen Liotard, a native of Geneva: he was born in 1702, and was designed for a merchant; but he went to study at Paris in 1725, and in 1738 accompanied the Marquis de Puisieux to Rome, who was going ambassador to Naples. At Rome he was taken notice of by the Earls of Sandwich, and Besborough, (then Lord Duncannon,) who engaged Liotard to go with them on a voyage to Constantinople.

At the Porte he became acquainted with Richard, second Lord Edgecumbe, (who was the particular and early friend of Mr. Reynolds,) and Sir

Everard Fawcener, our ambassador, who persuaded him to come to England. In his journey to the Levant he had adopted the Eastern habit, and wore it here with a very long beard. It contributed much to the portraits of himself, and some thought it was to attract customers. He painted both in miniature and enamel, though he seldom practised them: but he is best known by his works in crayons. His likenesses were very strong, and too like to please those who sat to him:—thus he had great employment the first year and very little the second. Devoid of imagination, he could render nothing but what he saw before his eyes. Freckles, marks of the small-pox, every thing found its place; not so much from fidelity, as because he could not conceive the absence of any thing that appeared to him. Minuteness prevailed in all his works, grace in none: nor was there any ease in his outlines; but the stiffness of a bust in all his portraits. Thence his heads want air and the softness of flesh.

Reynolds gives his opinion of this artist thus: “The only merit in Liotard’s pictures is neatness, which, as a general rule, is the characteristic of a low genius, or rather no genius at all. His pictures are just what ladies do when they paint for their amusement; nor is there any person, how poor soever their talents may be, but in a very few years, by dint of practice, may possess themselves of every qualification in the art which this

great man has got." Liotard was twice in England, and staid about two years each time.

In respect to the laborious, and what is called the finished manner, Reynolds used to add, that the high finished manner of painting would be to be chosen, if it was possible with it to have that spirit and expression which infallibly fly off when you labour; but those are transient beauties which last less than a moment, and must be painted in as little time; besides in poring long, the imagination is fatigued and loses its vigour. You will find nature in the first manner, but it will be nature stupid and without action. The portraits of Holbien are of this high finished manner; and for colouring and similitude, what was ever beyond them? but then you see fixed countenances, and all the features seem to remain immoveable. Gerard Vanderwerf also — how spiritless are his figures!

From the second portrait which Reynolds painted in the metropolis, that of William, second Duke of Devonshire, a print was taken in mezzotinto, and it is said to be the first print ever taken from any of his works. This could not fail to have some effect upon public opinion; but it will, no doubt, be interesting to have a sketch of his own feelings at the time from some manuscript memorandums, written carelessly, and apparently in haste, and in which I find the following observations, evidently referring to the fashionable painting of

Liotard, and affording us some idea of the false taste prevalent in England at that period. He says—

“ It requires an uncommon share of boldness and perseverance to stand against the rushing tide of Gothicism. A painter that would please, and has no greater views than making his fortune, I should advise, instead of studying the solemnity of Raffaele, Poussin, or the Caraccis, to turn his eyes on the beautiful and pleasing manner of painting that is practised by the ingenious fan painters. There he will find what is so often called out for—“ Give me daylight ;”—in those works he will find daylight enough ; and if he studies the bright and beautiful colours there made use of, he will merit the deserved and wished-for character of a pleasing painter. But to be serious ; I do not know so despicable a character in the art, as what is understood in general as a pleasing painter ; nor any thing that gives me a greater prejudice against a work, than when I am told I shall see a pleasing picture ; such works are commonly faint, spiritless, gaudy things ; how unlike the divine and noble vigour of Raffaele !

“ It is but a cold commendation to say of a painter—he pleases, and does no more. He ravishes ; he transports with admiration ; he seeks to take possession rather of your soul than of your eyes !—such is the character of a truly great painter.

“ It is a melancholy reflection to a painter, who has ambition, to think that a picture painted in the style and manner of the greatest masters, should not please the nation where he is obliged to live.

“ Those who are novices in connoissance judge of a picture only by the name of the painter ; others, more advanced in knowledge of art, have a desire to think differently from the rest of the world in respect to the most famous pictures ; and, again, from that partiality which men have to their own discoveries, will find out merits in pictures universally condemned.”

“ A real painter should be above any regard to pleasing the vulgar, whose judgment is governed solely by accident or caprice, and who are better pleased with a tawdry and false taste than with the pure, simple, and grand gusto of Raffaele, which is too deep to be reached by their superficial imagination ; but artists should not be content with admiring the effect ; let them carefully examine into the causes, and in so doing, they will find more art, and knowledge of nature, than they are at first aware of.”

Mr. Reynolds now exerted his talents to the utmost of their powers, and produced a singularly fine whole length portrait of his patron Commodore Keppel, in which he appears to be walking with a quick pace on the sea-shore, during a storm. This picture, by its excellence and the

novelty of the attitude, attracted general notice; and its design, as I have been informed, and perhaps with some truth, arose from the following interesting circumstance in the life of his noble friend.

Mr. Keppel having been appointed to the command of the Maidstone frigate in the year 1746, soon after his return from the eventful voyage under Commodore Anson, he was unfortunately wrecked in that ship, on the coast of France, on the 7th of July in the subsequent year; for, running close in shore, in pursuit of a French privateer, in the vicinity of Nantz, she struck and soon afterwards went to pieces. Captain Keppel, by his skill and active exertions, saved the lives of his crew; but they were immediately made prisoners: they, as well as he, were treated with great hospitality and politeness, and he himself was in a few weeks permitted to return to England, when a court-martial, as usual on such occasions, was held upon him, and he was honourably acquitted from all blame respecting the loss he had sustained.

The portrait represents him as just escaped from shipwreck; and has since been engraved by Fisher, that most exact and laborious artist, of whom Mr. Reynolds used to say, that he was injudiciously exact in his prints, which were mostly in the mezzotinto style, and wasted his time in making the precise shape of every leaf on a tree

with as much care as he would bestow on the features of a portrait. Fisher himself was not, indeed, brought up to the art; it is said that he was originally a hatter: he has, however, made some good copies of several of Reynolds's best pictures, particularly those of Garrick and Lady Sarah Bunbury.

The novelty and expression, introduced by Reynolds in his portrait of Mr. Keppel, were powerful stimulants to the public taste; and, as it has been well observed by one of his biographers, he "soon saw how much animation might be obtained by deviating from the insipid manner of his immediate predecessors; hence in many of his portraits, particularly when combined in family groups, we find much of the variety and spirit of a higher species of art. Instead of confining himself to mere likeness, in which, however, he was eminently happy, he dived, as it were, into the minds, and manners, and habits, of those who sat to him; and accordingly the majority of his portraits are so appropriate and characteristic, that the many illustrious persons whom he has delineated, will be almost as well known to posterity, as if they had seen and conversed with them."

In addition to his several bold, because early, advances to a judicious and original style in portrait painting, I may also record one which I have seen; a portrait painted at this time of a Captain Orme, aide-de-camp to General Braddock. This

picture attracted much notice by its boldness, and singularity of the attempt. It is a full length, wherein a horse is represented at the side of the officer; an effort in composition, so new to his barren competitors in art, as must have struck them with dismay, for they dared not venture on such perilous flights of invention. It must be observed that it is a very sombre picture, yet it possesses great merit.

Soon after this he added to his celebrity by his picture of Miss Greville and her brother, as Cupid and Psyche, which, it has been well observed, he composed and executed in a style superior to any portraits that had been produced in this kingdom since the days of Vandyke.

1754.

ÆTAT. 30.

MR. REYNOLDS was now employed to paint several ladies of high quality, whose portraits the polite world flocked to see, and he soon became one of the most distinguished painters, not only in England, but in Europe. For it should be remarked, that at this time there were no historical works to make a demand upon the painter's skill: and though it may seem a curious observation, it will nevertheless be found, on examination, to be one most true, that hitherto this empire of Great Britain, so great, so rich, so magnificent, so bene-

volent, so abundant in all the luxury that the most ample wealth could procure, even this exalted empire had never yet been able to keep above one single historical painter from starving, whilst portrait painters have swarmed in a plenty, at all times thick as "autumnal leaves in Vallombrosa."

A true taste was wanting: vanity, however, was not wanting; and the desire to perpetuate the form of self-complacency crowded his sitting room with women who wished to be transmitted as angels, and with men who wanted to appear as heroes and philosophers. From Reynolds's pencil they were sure to be gratified. The force and felicity of his portraits not only drew around him the opulence and beauty of the nation, but happily gained him the merited honour of perpetuating the features of all the eminent and distinguished men of learning then living; with most of whom (so attractive were his manners as well as his talents) he contracted an intimacy which only ended with life. In this assemblage of genius, each was improved by each. Reynolds, like a man of a great mind, always cultivated the acquaintance and friendship of the first characters of his time; and often assisted those who were in difficulties, both with his advice and his purse.

He had a mind ever open and desirous to acquire useful information, a sound and penetrating judgement to select and separate what he acquired,

and infinite industry and application in rendering it serviceable to its proper purpose.

In his own memoranda, written at this period, a circumstance is given, which proves the quickness of his perception, and the use he made of it. He there describes the effect which a certain picture, by an old master, had upon one of his sitters; but as he does not specify the particular picture, we can only judge of its excellence from the trait recorded. It was a work, however, which he himself greatly admired, and at that time was hung up as one of the ornaments of his painting-room.

“To support,” he says, “my own opinion of the excellence of this picture by a high authority, I cannot forbear the temptation of mentioning, that Lord ——, whilst I had the honor of drawing his portrait, could not keep from turning his eyes from me, and fixing them on this picture in raptures, with such an expression in his countenance as may be imagined from a man of his tender feelings. I snatched the moment, and drew him, as he then appeared to me, in profile, with as much of that expression of a pleasing melancholy as my capacity enabled me to hit off; when the picture was finished, he liked it, and particularly for that expression, though I believe without reflecting on the occasion of it.”

It was not my good fortune to be personally acquainted with him at this early period of his

fame, when he first became intimate with the (afterwards) great Dr. Johnson ; to whom, as Mr. Boswell says, “ Reynolds was truly the *dulce decus*, and with whom he maintained an uninterrupted intimacy to the last hour of his life.” I shall therefore avail myself of the very just account of the event, as related by Mr. Malone, in the sketch prefixed to his works.

“ Very soon after Mr. Reynolds’s return from Italy, his acquaintance with Dr. Johnson commenced ; and their intimacy continued uninterrupted to the time of Johnson’s death. Happening to meet with the *Life of Savage* in Devonshire, which, though published some years before, was new to him, he began to read it,” as Mr. Boswell has informed us, “ while he was standing with his arm leaning against a chimney-piece. It seized his attention so strongly, that, not being able to lay down the book till he had finished it, when he attempted to move, he found his arm totally benumbed.” Being then unacquainted with the author, he must naturally have had a strong desire to see and converse with that extraordinary man ; and, as the same writer relates, he, about this time, was introduced to him. When Johnson lived in Castle-street, Cavendish-square, he used to visit two ladies who resided at that time in Newport-street, opposite to Reynolds’s, Miss Cotterells, daughters of Admiral Cotterell ; Reynolds visited there also, and thus they met. Mr.

Reynolds, as I have observed above, had, from the first reading of his *Life of Savage*, conceived a very high admiration of Johnson's powers as a writer. His conversation no less delighted him, and he cultivated his acquaintance with the laudable zeal of one who was ambitious of general improvement. Mr. Reynolds, indeed, was lucky enough, at their very first meeting, to make a remark, which was so much above the common place style of conversation, that Johnson at once perceived that Reynolds had the habit of thinking for himself. The ladies were regretting the death of a friend to whom they owed great obligations; upon which Reynolds observed, "You have, however, the comfort of being relieved from the burden of gratitude." They were shocked a little at this alleviating suggestion, as too selfish; but Johnson defended it in his clear and forcible manner, and was much pleased with the *mind*, the just view of human nature it exhibited, like some of the reflections of Rochefoucault. The consequence was, that he went home with Reynolds, and supped with him. Mr. Reynolds used to relate a characteristic anecdote of Johnson. About the time of their first acquaintance, when they were one evening together at the Miss Cotterells', the then Duchess of Argyle and another lady of high rank came in: Johnson, thinking that the Miss Cotterells were too much engrossed by them, and that he and his friend were neglected as low

company, of whom they were somewhat ashamed, grew angry ; and resolving to shock their supposed pride, by making their great visitors imagine they were low indeed, he addressed himself in a loud tone to Mr. Reynolds, saying, “ How much do you think you and I could get in a week, if we were *to work as hard as we could ?*” as if they had been common mechanics.

This anecdote, as it relates to Johnson, betrays in him more of pride, envy, and vulgarity, than of the patience of philosophy, totally unlike the disposition of his companion to whom he addressed his speech.

In regard to Reynolds’s first acquaintance with Johnson, I have little to add ; yet, with respect to the book which first engaged his attention towards the latter, it is worthy of remark how conspicuous the extraordinary credulity of Johnson appears in his *Life of Savage*. It is wonderful, indeed, that he did not convince himself whilst he was writing it, as there needs no other witness than his own narrative, to prove that he attempts to vindicate an imposture !

Of Johnson’s pride, I have heard Reynolds himself observe, that if any man drew him into a state of obligation without his own consent, that man, was the first he would affront, by way of clearing off the account. There is, in some men’s minds, a repugnance to, nay an abhorrence of, a dependent state of obligation, or of resting on an-

other's patronage. This at its birth proceeds from dignity of soul, and proves the consciousness of inward strength. (A virtuous reverence of ourselves is the foundation of respect from others;) yet care should be taken that it does not swell into deformity, or lose its native comeliness and virtuous principle from being nursed and tutored by pride.

With respect to a state of obligation, one great inconvenience certainly may attend it, which is, that at some time it is possible that the patron may give a real and sufficient cause to his humble dependant to be offended. The meek sufferer is then in a dilemma. If he patiently swallows the bitter potion from a sense of duty for former favors, he will be considered as a slave, and as mean in spirit; and, on the the other hand, to resent it like a man, will to many appear much like ingratitude. Yet, again, to determine, like Johnson, to go through life, and to resist all patronage whatsoever, may indicate a proud and unsocial spirit!

Another anecdote, which I heard related by Miss Reynolds serves to shew how susceptible Johnson's pride was of the least degree of mortification.

At the time when Mr. Reynolds resided in Newport-street, he, one afternoon, accompanied by his sister Frances, paid a visit to the Miss Cotterells, who lived much in the fashionable world. Johnson was also of the party on this tea visit;

and at that time being very poor, he was, as might be expected, rather shabbily and slovenly apparelled. The maid servant, by accident, attended at the door to let them in, but did not know Johnson, although he had been a frequent visitor at the house, he having always been attended by the man servant. Johnson was the last of the three that came in; when the servant maid, seeing this uncouth and dirty figure of a man, and not conceiving he could be one of the company who came to visit her mistresses, laid hold of his coat just as he was going up stairs, and pulled him back again, saying, "You fellow, what is your business here? I suppose you intended to rob the house." This most unlucky accident threw poor Johnson into such a fit of shame and anger, that he roared out like a bull, for he could not immediately articulate, and was with difficulty at last able to utter, "What have I done? What have I done?" Nor could he recover himself for the remainder of the evening from this mortifying circumstance.

Of these ladies, the Miss Cotterells, so often mentioned in Johnson's Biography, as well as by the different writers who speak of Reynolds, it will not be reckoned obtrusive here to notice that they were the daughters of a very respectable naval officer, Rear Admiral Charles Cotterell, who, towards the latter part of his life, was not employed in the service, having been put on the

superannuated list of flag-officers in 1747. He died in 1754, very soon after Reynolds's acquaintance took place with his family.*

I have noticed this gentleman the more particularly as his daughters have been so often mentioned: and, in unison with the preceding anecdote of the Doctor, whose external appearance had so much deceived the servant at the Miss Cotterells, I may also add, that Johnson, it is well known, was as remarkably uncouth in his gait and action as slovenly in his dress, insomuch as to attract the attention of passengers who by chance met him in the street. Once, particularly, he was thus annoyed by an impertinent fellow, who noticed, and insultingly imitated him in de-

* His first appointment to the command of a ship was in 1726, when he succeeded Sir Yelverton Peyton in the Diamond frigate; and five years afterwards he was removed to the Princess Louisa, a line of battle ship. On the rupture with Spain, in 1739, he was commissioned in the Lion, of sixty guns, and served with Sir John Norris in the Channel fleet during the ensuing summer; after which he was ordered to proceed to the West Indies, in a squadron commanded by Sir Chaloner Ogle, for the express purpose of reinforcing Admiral Vernon, previous to the attack upon Carthagea. Captain Cotterell was actively engaged in that service, and, soon after its failure, returned to England; when, his ship being paid off, he was appointed to the command of the Canterbury in 1742. In that ship he went on service to Gibraltar, and on his return was promoted to the Royal George, in which ship he served for some time in the Channel fleet; but this was his last commission, as he remained unemployed after her being paid off, and, according to the etiquette of the service, lost his flag, not being in actual service, and in full pay, when the promotion took place in 1747.

rision so ludicrously, that the Doctor could not avoid seeing it, and was obliged to resent the affront, which he did in this manner: "Ah!" said Johnson, "you are a very weak fellow, and I will convince you of it;" and then immediately gave him a blow, which knocked the man out of the foot-path into the dirty street flat on his back, when the Doctor walked calmly on.

Another circumstance Reynolds used to mention relative to Dr. Johnson, which gives an idea of the situation and mode of living of that great philosopher in the early part of his life.

Roubiliac, the famous sculptor, desired of Reynolds that he would introduce him to Dr. Johnson, at the time when the Doctor lived in Gough-square, Fleet-street. His object was to prevail on Johnson to write an epitaph for a monument, on which Roubiliac was then engaged for Westminster Abbey. Reynolds accordingly introduced the sculptor to the Doctor, they being strangers to each other, when Johnson received him with much civility, and took them up into a garret, which he considered as his library; where, besides his books, all covered with dust, there was an old crazy deal table, and a still worse and older elbow chair, having only three legs. In this chair Johnson seated himself, after having, with considerable dexterity and evident practice, first drawn it up against the wall, which served to support it on that side on which the leg was deficient. He then

took up his pen, and demanded what they wanted him to write. On this Roubiliac, who was a true Frenchman, (as may be seen by his works,) began a most bombastic and ridiculous harangue, on what he thought should be the kind of epitaph most proper for his purpose, all which the Doctor was to write down for him in correct language; when Johnson, who could not suffer any one to dictate to him, quickly interrupted him in an angry tone of voice, saying, “Come, come, Sir, let us have no more of this bombastic, ridiculous rhodomontade, but let me know, in simple language, the name, character, and quality, of the person whose epitaph you intend to have me write.”

Such was the first interview of two men both eminent for genius; and of Roubiliac I may here record another anecdote, which took place on the return of that sculptor from Rome, when he paid a visit to Reynolds, and expressed himself in raptures on what he had seen on the continent—on the exquisite beauty of the works of antiquity, and the captivating and luxuriant splendour of Bernini. “It is natural to suppose,” said he, “that I was infinitely impatient till I had taken a survey of my own performances in Westminster Abbey, after having seen such a variety of excellence, and by G— my own work looked to me meagre and starved, as if made of nothing but tobacco-pipes.”

A strong proof this of the improvement he had gained from his tour to the continent, of his candor, and uncommon humility.*

* The following anecdote has been communicated to me by a friend, respecting this modern sculptor, of whom some notice has above been taken.

“Roubiliac, being on a visit in Wiltshire, happened to take a walk in a church-yard on a Sunday morning, near Bowood, just as the congregation was coming out of church; and meeting with old Lord Shelburne, though perfect strangers to each other, they entered into conversation, which ended in an invitation to dinner. When the company were all assembled at table, Roubiliac discovered a fine antique bust of one of the Roman Emperesses, which stood over a side-table, when immediately running up to it with a degree of enthusiasm, he exclaimed, “What an air! what a pretty mouth! what *tout ensemble!*” The company began to stare at one another for some time, and Roubiliac regained his seat; but instead of eating his dinner, or shewing attention to any thing about him, he every now and then burst out into fits of admiration in praise of the bust. The guests by this time, concluding he was mad, began to retire one by one, till Lord Shelburne was almost left alone. This determined his Lordship to be a little more particular; and he now, for the first time, asked him his name. “My name!” says the other, “What, do you not know me then? My name is Roubiliac.”—“I beg your pardon, Sir,” said his Lordship; “I now feel that I should have known you.” Then calling on the company, who had retired to the next room, he said, “Ladies and gentlemen, you may come in; this is no absolute madman. This is M. Roubiliac, the greatest statuary of his day, and only occasionally mad in the admiration of his art.”

1755.

ÆTAT. 31.

IN 1755, Mr. Reynolds was still advancing in fame. His price in that year was twelve guineas for a head only, and for half and whole lengths in proportion: and in his memoranda of the 6th of December of that year, I find the following record of the colours he then made use of, and of the preparation of his pallet:

“For painting the flesh;—black, blue black, white, lake, carmine, orpiment, yellow ochre, ultramarine, and varnish.

“To lay the pallet;—first lay carmine and white in different degrees; second, lay orpiment and white, ditto; third, lay blue black, and white, ditto.

“The first sitting, for expedition, make a mixture on the pallet as near the sitter’s complexion as you can.”

He adds also this observation on colouring:—

“To preserve the colours fresh and clean in painting, it must be done by laying on more colours, and not by rubbing them in when they are once laid; and, if it can be done, they should be laid just in their proper places at first, and not any more be touched: because the freshness of the colours is tarnished and lost by mixing and jumbling them together; for there are certain colours which destroy each other, by the motion of the pencil, when mixed to excess.”

1756.

ÆTAT. 32.

DOCTOR JOHNSON had a great desire to cultivate the friendship of Richardson, the author of *Clarissa*, and with this view paid him frequent visits.* These were received very coldly by the latter; “but,” observed the Doctor (in speaking of this to a friend), “I was determined to persist till I had gained my point; because I knew very well, that, when I had once overcome his reluctance and shyness of humour, our intimacy would contribute much to the happiness of both.” The event verified the Doctor’s prediction.

It must, however, be remarked, that an intimacy with Johnson was always attended with a certain portion of inconvenience to persons whose time was much occupied; as his visits, to those he liked, were long, frequent, and very irregular in regard to the hours.

The Doctor’s intercourse with Reynolds was at first produced in the same manner as is described in respect to Richardson. He frequently called in the evening, and remained to a late hour, when Mr. Reynolds was desirous of going into new company, after having been harassed by his professional occupations the whole day. This some-

* Johnson had been known to Richardson for some years previous to the above date.

times overcame his patience to such a degree, that, one evening in particular, on entering the room where Johnson was waiting to see him, he immediately took up his hat and went out of the house. Reynolds hoped by this means he would have been effectually cured; but Johnson still persisted and at last gained his friendship.

1757.

ÆTAT. 33.

JOHNSON introduced Mr. Reynolds and his sister to Richardson, but hinted to them at the same time, that, if they wished to see the latter in good humour, they must expatiate on the excellencies of his Clarissa.

Johnson soon became a frequent visitor at Mr. Reynolds's, particularly at Miss Reynolds's tea-table, where he had every opportunity of female conversation whilst drinking his favorite beverage.

Indeed his visits were not alone to Reynolds, but to Miss Reynolds, for whom he had the highest respect and veneration: to such a degree, that, some years afterwards, whilst the company at Mr. Thrale's were speculating upon a microscope for the mind, Johnson exclaimed, "I never saw one that would bear it, except that of my dear Miss Reynolds, and her's is very near to purity itself."

There is no doubt that Miss Reynolds gained much of his good-will by her good-humoured at-

tention to his extraordinary predilection for tea; he himself saying, that he wished his tea-kettle never to be cold. But Reynolds having once, whilst spending the evening at Mr. Cumberland's, reminded him of the enormous quantity he was swallowing, observing, that he had drank eleven cups, Johnson replied, "Sir, I did not count your glasses of wine, why then should you number up my cups of tea?"

Johnson's extraordinary, or rather extravagant, fondness for this refreshment did not fail to excite notice wherever he went; and it is related, though not by Boswell, that whilst on his Scottish tour, and spending some time at Dunvegan, the castle of the chief of the Macleods, the Dowager Lady Macleod having repeatedly helped him, until she had poured out sixteen cups, she then asked him, if a small bason would not save him trouble and be more agreeable?—"I wonder, Madam," answered he roughly, "why all the ladies ask me such questions! It is to save yourselves trouble, Madam, and not me." The lady was silent, and resumed her task. Every reader, in this place, will recollect the so often told anecdote of his versification at Mr. Reynolds's tea-table, when criticising Percy's *Reliques*, and imitating his ballad style—

"Oh! hear it then my Renny dear,
Nor hear it with a frown—
You cannot make the tea so fast
As I can gulp it down."

Doctor Johnson's high opinion of Sir Joshua Reynolds was formed at a very early period of their intimacy, and increased, instead of diminishing, through life. Once at Mr. Thrale's, when Reynolds left the room, Johnson observed, "There goes a man not to be spoiled by prosperity;"—and on another occasion he said, "A story is a specimen of human manners, and derives its sole merit from its truth. When Foote has told me something, I dismiss it from my mind like a passing shadow: when Reynolds tells me something, I consider myself as possessed of an idea the more." It was about this time too, that a conversation took place between him and Johnson, which may, in some measure, be considered as a kind of apology on the part of Johnson, for having, in a degree, forced himself into an intimacy; when Johnson said, "If a man does not make new acquaintance as he advances through life, he will soon find himself alone: a man, Sir, should keep his friendship in constant repair."

1758.

ÆTAT. 34.

FROM a letter of Dr. Johnson to Bennet Langton, in the year 1758, we find that the fame of Mr. Reynolds had so far increased, as to justify him in raising his price pretty considerably. He says—"Mr. Reynolds has this day (January 9th)

raised his price to twenty guineas a head, and Miss is much employed in miniatures. I know not any body else whose prosperity has increased since you left them."

It was about the period of 1758, when his price was only twenty guineas a head, that Reynolds found his profession the most lucrative: as I have heard himself confess, that, at that time, he received six sitters in the day, and found it necessary to keep a list of the names of those who waited, until vacancies occurred, in order to have their portraits painted by him. He then received them in the order in which they were set down in the list. Many of those portraits were sent home, even before the colours were dry. And he sometimes has lamented the being interrupted in his work by idle visitors, saying, "those persons do not consider that my time is worth, to me, five guineas an hour."

He kept a port-folio in his painting-room, containing every print that had then been taken from his portraits; so that those who came to sit, had this collection to look over, and if they fixed on any particular attitude, in preference, he would repeat it precisely in point of drapery and position; as this much facilitated the business, and was sure to please the sitter's fancy.*

* In an account of the rise of the arts, or the encouragement given to them in this country, at the time when Reynolds was fast advancing towards the attainment of fame, it may not be

He now engaged several drapery painters to assist him : indeed, I have heard him observe, that

unsuitable to mention, what all preceding biographers have passed over, the liberality of the Duke of Richmond. The following is the copy of an advertisement which was published in the weekly papers during the years 1758 and 1759 :—

“ For the use of those who study
Painting, Sculpture, and Engraving, will be opened,
On Monday, the 6th of March next,
At his Grace the Duke of Richmond’s,
In Whitehall,

“ A room containing a large collection of original plaister casts from the best antique statues and busts which are now at Rome and Florence.

“ It is imagined, that the study of these most exact copies from antiques may greatly contribute towards giving young beginners of genius an early taste and idea of beauty and proportion, which, when thoroughly acquired, will, in time, appear in their several performances.

“ The public is therefore advertised, that any known painter, sculptor, carver, or other settled artist, to whom the study of these *gessos* may be of use, shall have liberty to draw or model from any of them, at any time ; and upon application to the person that has the care of them, any particular figure shall be placed in such light as the artist shall desire.

“ And, likewise, any young man or boy, above the age of twelve years, may also have the same liberty, by a recommendation from any known artist to Mr. Wilton, sculptor, in Hedge Lane.

“ For these young persons, a fresh statue or bust will be set once a week or fortnight in a proper light for them to draw from.

“ They will only be admitted from the hour of nine to eleven in the morning, and from the hour of two to four in the afternoon.

“ On Saturday, Messrs. Wilton and Cipriani will attend to see what progress each has made, to correct their drawings and models, and give them such instruction as shall be thought necessary.

“ Nobody

nò man ever acquired a fortune by the work of his own hands alone.

1759.

ÆTAT. 35.

NOTWITHSTANDING Mr. Reynolds's prosperity was now so great as to occupy the whole of his time, yet, in the succeeding year, he found leisure to produce his first efforts in the literary way, consisting of three papers for the *Idler*, then conducted and principally executed by his friend Johnson. At that time, indeed, Johnson was under many obligations, as well as those literary ones, to Reynolds, whose generous kindness would never per-

“ Nobody is to touch any of the *gessos* upon any account, or to move them out of their places, or draw upon either them, their pedestals, or the walls of the room; any person offending in such a manner will be dismissed, and never admitted again upon any consideration.

“ There will be given, at Christmas and Midsummer, annually, to those who distinguish themselves by making the greatest progress, the following premiums:

“ A figure will be selected from the rest, and a large silver medal will be given for the best design of it, and another for the best model in basso relievo.

“ A smaller silver medal for the second best design, and one for the second best basso relievo.

“ The servant who takes care of the room has strict orders not to receive any money. It is therefore hoped and expected that none will be offered.”

London Chronicle, Feb. 25, 1758.

mit his friends to *ask* a pecuniary favour;—his purse and heart being always open.

Johnson, however, still preserved the strong spirit of independent exertion; and being at this period pushed for money to defray the expenses of his mother's funeral, and to settle some little debts she had left, he sat down to his "*Rasselas*," which, as he afterwards informed his friend Reynolds, he composed in the evenings of a single week, having it printed as rapidly as it was written, and not allowing himself time even for correction before it was sent to the press; nor did he read it over until several years afterwards, when finding it accidentally in a chaise, whilst travelling in company with Mr. Boswell. Yet this work, so hastily written, enabled the publisher to pay him the sum of one hundred and twenty-five pounds.

I have heard Reynolds repeat a speech which the Doctor made about this time, and in which he gave himself credit in two particulars:—"There are two things," said he, "which I am confident I can do very well: one is, an introduction to any literary work, stating what it is to contain, and how it should be executed in the most perfect manner; the other is a conclusion, shewing, from various causes, why the execution has not been equal to what the author promised to himself and to the public."

The papers in the *Idler*, by Reynolds to which I have alluded, are the Numbers 76, 79, and 82, written between September and November, 1759.* In the first of these he ridicules, with considerable humour, the cant of ignorant and presuming connoisseurs, who, trusting to narrow rules, are often guided by *false* principles; and, even though these should be *correct*, are still totally unqualified to form a just estimation of the sublime beauties in works of genius: and in this Essay he states a position which, given with his ingenuity, has an appearance of as much novelty as truth, that whatever part of an art can be executed or criticised by rules, that part is no longer the work of genius, which implies excellence out of the reach of rules: so that, as he adds, if a man has not correct perceptions, it will be in vain for him to endeavour to supply their place by rules, which, though they may certainly enable him to talk more learnedly, will never teach him to distinguish more acutely. In laying down these positions, he does not, however, assert that rules are absolutely injurious to a just perception of works of taste and genius, or to their execution; but merely censures that scrupulous and servile attention to minute exactness or frivolous ornament, which are sometimes uncon-

* Published by Newbery in the *Universal Chronicle*, or *Weekly Gazette*, on Saturday, Sept. 29, Oct. 20, and Nov. 10, 1759.

sistent with higher excellence, and always lost in the blaze of expanded genius.

In his second Essay he displays a considerable depth of thought, and great quickness of perception, on the just meaning of the general rule, “to imitate nature.” He shews that a mere literal adherence to this rule would baulk every flight of fancy in the painter, though these flights are what serve to immortalize the poet; such imitation, if conducted servilely, being a species of drudgery to which the painter of genius can never stoop, and one in which even the understanding has no part, being merely a mechanical effort. He further shews, that Painting has its best plea for claiming kindred with its sister, Poetry, from the power which, like her, it can exercise over the imagination; and, as he adds, it is to this power that the painter of genius directs his aim: in this sense he studies nature, and often arrives at his end, even by being unnatural, in the confined sense of the word. His concluding remarks in this Essay, on the works of Michael Angelo, contain in themselves a volume of criticism, and display that “enthusiasm of intellectual energy,” by which he was always moved, when speaking of, or contemplating the productions of, those masters most eminent for their intellectual power.

In the third Essay, his definition of beauty is as clear and distinct as his conception of it was accurate: and from the inference he draws—that the

works of nature, if we compare one species with another, are all equally beautiful, and that preference is given from custom, or from some association of ideas, and thus, that in creatures of the same species, beauty is the medium or centre of all its various forms—he again illustrates and confirms the principle of his first Essay, proving that the painter, by attending to the invariable and general ideas of nature, produces beauty ; but that, if he regards minute particularities and accidental discriminations, so far will he deviate from the universal rule, ‘ and pollute his canvas with deformity.’* Indeed, those papers may be considered as a kind of syllabus of all his future discourses, and certainly occasioned him some thinking in their composition. I have heard Reynolds say, that Johnson required them from him on a sudden emergency, and on that account he sat up the whole night to complete them in time ; and by it he was so much disordered, that it produced a vertigo in his head.

In addition to what I have already said respecting Reynolds’s contributions to the *Idler*, I may here add, that at that time he had also committed to paper a variety of remarks on the occasion, which afterwards served him as hints for his discourses ; and from those unfinished memoranda I now insert a few of his first thoughts, evidently drawn up as matter of caution for himself:—

* This concluding passage was added by Johnson.

“ Avoid that insipidity which is very commonly the result when you take your ideas from any preceding master. Salvator Rosa saw the necessity of trying some new source of pleasing the public in his works. The world were tired with Claude Lorraine’s and Gasper Poussin’s long train of imitators.

“ Salvator, therefore, struck into a wild, savage kind of nature, which was new and striking. Sannazarius, the Italian poet, for the same reason, substituted fishermen for shepherds, and changed the scene to the sea.

“ The want of simplicity in the air of the head, the action of the figure, and colour of the drapery, is destructive of dignity. If a painter has a true taste for simplicity, it will be discovered in every part of his work, even his colouring; there is a pure, chaste modesty, as it may be called, in opposition to a bold, impudent, glaring colour, such as you see in ordinary painters’ works.

“ Indeed, the want of simplicity is the prevailing error in most painters respecting their works. They are apt to think they can never enrich their pictures too much; their colours are gaudy in the extreme: but what I particularly object against is the violent love that almost all of them have for contrast; and I dare say there is scarcely a painter but thinks he can never contrast his figures too much.

“ The French writers on painting, which are the

best we have, are fond of talking of contrast :—
“ If one figure,” says Du Piles, “ is with the face towards you, let the next to it shew his back.” Those rules can only proceed from a narrow-minded mechanical artist ; and not from one who has studied nature, the antique, Raffaelle, or the Carraccis. I do not mean to say that such contrast will always have a mean effect ; but to establish it as an inviolable rule is absurd, and tends to destroy the greatest beauty of a painting, which should represent pure, unaffected nature. By means of those studied contrasts, no figure so placed can appear eager and intent on what he is about. It gives also a hurry and confusion to the composition of the picture ; and of consequence, the same hurry of imagination to the spectator, and deprives the work of its most noble quality, which is the majesty of repose.

“ When I think of this high principle of the art, it always brings to my mind the finest pictures at Bologna by Lud. Carracci, and the Transfiguration by Raffaelle. In this last, every figure is animated, ardent, and intent on what he is engaged in, but still with dignity ; then there is also a certain solemnity pervading the whole picture which must strike every one with awe and reverence, that is capable of being touched by any excellence in works of art.

“ When I have stood looking at that picture from figure to figure, the eagerness, the spirit, the

close unaffected attention of each figure to the principal action, my thoughts have carried me away that I have forgot myself; and for that time might be looked upon as an enthusiastic madman: for I could really fancy the whole action was passing before my eyes. How superior is this power of leading captive the imagination, to that of producing natural drapery, although so natural, that, as the phrase is, it looks as if you could take it up! A picture having this effect on the spectator, he need not ask his cicerone whether it is a good picture or not, nor endeavour to criticise it by the help of any rules he may have learned from books.

“ But whilst others only admire the work, it is the artist’s business to examine from whence this effect proceeds. I will take the liberty of giving a hint; others may carry it further. The solemnity that the picture first strikes you with, proceeds from its not having too much light, for the same reason that the light of the evening is more solemn than the gay sun at noon day; consequently, he, who would attempt the heroic style in painting, should never set his figures in bright sunshine;* and it is for this reason I have often said, that Rubens’s colouring, although a much more esteemed colourist than Raffaelle, would degrade and ruin Raffaelle’s pictures.

* “ Vide King John tampering with Hubert, in Shakespeare’s play.”

“ Another excellence in the picture of the Transfiguration is the noble kind of harmony of the colouring; a quality, perhaps, this picture has never been remarked for before. It is one of the vulgar errors to imagine, that a picture can never have too much harmony; hence painters, by breaking their colours too much, reduce their picture to be an imitation of a painting on a lady's fan, and entirely destroy its effect when seen at any distance, those broken colours being too weak to preserve their proper degree of force. For instance, the works of Luca Jordano, by an over fondness for this sort of harmony, when they are placed at a distance from the spectator, look altogether like the colour of milk and water. A very close comparison may be made between the harmony of music and that of painting. Music of the soft, gentle, and delicate kind, intended to be heard best when near, requires the notes to be soft, and fall gently into each other, without any harshness in their extremes; whilst, on the contrary, the more masculine and noble style of music, such as marches, &c. should be bold and loud.

“ The same rule applies to poetry. The smooth numbers of Pope are not so grand as the masculine style of Milton and Shakespeare.

“ It is not always necessary that the principal light should fall on the principal figure; for it may not always be convenient in regard to the propriety of the composition. The principal light

should always be near the middle of the picture ; but the principal figure cannot always be placed there. It may be sufficient that the figure which receives the principal light directs you to the principal figure by its action ; as may be seen instanced in Raffaele's Transfiguration. There is also a principal colour as well as a principal light. The Reds, Blues, Yellows, &c. which may be scattered up and down in the picture—of these, one should be principal, to govern all the rest ; and this even to the flesh colours. The greatest masters, in order to make a principal colour that shall absorb, if I may so say, even the faces, have, wherever the subject will admit of it, introduced a naked figure which most effectually does it : but when the subject is such as will not admit of a naked figure, the artist must do as Raffaele has done in the Transfiguration, who has clothed the female figure, which receives the principal light, with a bright carnation colour, and made her point to the principal object of the transaction, so that this red drapery, which receives a large and broad light, is the principal of all the Reds in the picture.

“ The Transfiguration is the most compleat picture in respect to harmony, in the grand stile, as Guido's Aurora is in the gay stile ; but all the colours of the latter are so broken and of such changeable stuffs, that you can scarce call them by a name. It is a picture, gay, soft, and pleasing.

Raffaelle's, with equal harmony, has colours bold, masculine, and dense. The eye does not run so softly from one colour to another, as in Guido's; but here, if I may use the expression, the eye feels the colours; they are strong, sensible, and embodied. Guido's in comparison appears flimsy. There is as much difference between them as between masculine and feminine.

“ Rembrandt was harmonious rather too much; he wanted opposition. Luca Jordano was often the same, but wanted that fine taste of colouring.

“ Berghem was too red.

“ There cannot be found a better instance of breadth and distinctness of light and shadow, than in a figure by Fiamingo, in the church of St. Peter at Rome, a full length statue of St. Bartholomew, four times the size of life. The other statues, which are near it, appear all of a mass, and make neither light nor shadow.

“ It is absolutely necessary that a painter, as the first requisite, should endeavour as much as possible to form to himself an idea of perfection, not only of beauty, but of what is perfection in a picture. This conception he should always have fixed in his view, and unless he has this view we shall never see any approaches towards perfection in his works, for it will not come by chance.

“ If a man has nothing of that which is called genius, that is, if he is not carried away (if I may so say) by the animation, the fire of enthusiasm,

all the rules in the world will never make him a painter.

“ He who possesses genius, is enabled to see a real value in those things which others disregard and overlook. He perceives a difference in cases where inferior capacities see none, as the fine ear for music can distinguish an evident variation in sounds which to another ear more dull seem to be the same. This example will also apply to the eye in respect to colouring.

“ One who has a genius will comprehend in his idea the whole of his work at once; whilst he who is deficient in genius amuses himself with trifling parts of small consideration, attends with scrupulous exactness to the minuter matters only, which he finishes to a nicety, whilst the whole together has a very ill effect.

“ A painter should have a solid foundation in the principles of his art; so as to be able to vindicate his works whenever they may be unjustly censured; and not of such an unstable judgement as to estimate the merit of his pieces by the money they bring him.

“ The most general rule in the choice of subjects fit for the purpose of the art is that of Horace:—

“ *Omne tulit punctum, qui miscuit utile dulci,
Lectorem delectando, pariterque monendo.*”

Such were his desultory thoughts to which he

could recur to refresh his memory as occasion might require.

1760.

ÆTAT. 36.

THE efforts of Mr. Reynolds had not only produced an improvement in the art, in consequence of the number of professional men who imitated his style, but had also infused such a taste in the public at large, that in the year 1760, they were content to pay twenty-five guineas for a head.

This improved taste in portrait painting had also extended itself to other departments of the art, which even but ten years before had been at a low ebb in public opinion; for though the artists had contrived to support, by annual subscription, an academy in St. Martin's-lane, governed by a committee of the whole body, yet that whole body consisted of but a very small number.

The public attention, indeed, had been fortunately, in some measure, engaged by the paintings which several of the professors had gratuitously bestowed on the Foundling Hospital; and the body of artists were, from the result of this experiment, stimulated to form a general exhibition of their several works, which first took place in this year, at the great room of the Society for the Encouragement of Arts, Manufactures, and Commerce, lent them for the express purpose. The

exhibition so far succeeded as to have the double effect of amusing and enlightening the public, whilst the artists themselves were also gainers by the spirit of emulation excited by competition: for as Edwards observes, from the time of the accession of his present Majesty to the throne, the arts have made more rapid advances towards perfection in Great Britain, than ever was known in any other country in so short a space of time.

1761.

ÆTAT. 37.

JOHNSON, this year, in a letter to Baretti, alludes to the general exhibition just established, saying, “The artists have instituted a yearly exhibition of pictures and statues, in imitation, I am told, of foreign academies. This year was the second exhibition. They please themselves much with the multitude of spectators, and imagine that the English school will rise much in reputation. Reynolds is without a rival, and continues to add thousands to thousands, which he deserves, among other excellencies, by retaining his kindness for Baretti.

“This exhibition has filled the heads of the artists, and lovers of Art. Surely life, if it be not long, is tedious; since we are forced to call in the assistance of so many trifles, to rid us of our time—of that time which never can return.”

The cynical turn of this latter observation is certainly not in unison with the sentiments which dictated the former part of the passage ; but we must make allowances not only for the want of perception of the beauties of painting, which was the natural consequence of Johnson's near-sightedness, but also for that species of envy which perhaps even Johnson felt, when comparing his own annual gains with those of his more fortunate friend.

At the first exhibition opened by the artists, the catalogue was the ticket of admission by which whole companies could be admitted ; but this mode was found, by experiment, to produce little other than tumult, and it was then considered as absolutely necessary to demand one shilling admission from each person. Johnson, although he speaks so superciliously of the arts, yet willingly employed his pen in composing a preface to the catalogue, which was then given gratis : but as this was a new regulation, it was thought requisite by the artists to give reasons to the public for this alteration ; and as Johnson has done this so well in his forcible and clear language, explaining the nature and intention of the exhibition, and has also given so essential a part of historical information in the region of the arts, I apprehend no apology can be necessary for inserting it in this place.

WRITTEN BY DR. JOHNSON.

“ The public may justly require to be informed of the nature and extent of every design for which the favour of the public is openly solicited. The artists, who were themselves the first promoters of an exhibition in this nation, and who have now contributed to the following catalogue, think it, therefore, necessary to explain their purpose, and justify their conduct. An exhibition of the works of art being a spectacle new in the kingdom, has raised various opinions and conjectures among those who are unacquainted with the practice of foreign nations.) Those who set their performances to general view have too often been considered the rivals of each other; as men actuated, if not by avarice, at least by vanity, as contending for superiority of fame, though not for a pecuniary prize. It cannot be denied or doubted, that all who offer themselves to criticism are desirous of praise; this desire is not only innocent but virtuous, while it is undebased by artifice, and unpolluted by envy; and of envy or artifice those men can never be accused, who, already enjoying all the honors and profits of their profession, are content to stand candidates for public notice, with genius yet unexperienced, and diligence yet unrewarded; who, without any hope of increasing their own reputation or interest, expose their names and their works, only that they may furnish an opportunity of ap-

pearance to the young, the diffident, and the neglected. The purpose of this exhibition is not to enrich the artist, but to advance the art; the eminent are not flattered with preference; nor the obscure insulted with contempt; whoever hopes to deserve public favor, is here invited to display his merit. Of the price put upon this exhibition, some account may be demanded. Whoever sets his works to be shewn, naturally desires a multitude of spectators; but his desire defeats its own end, when spectators assemble in such numbers as to obstruct one another.

“ Though we are far from wishing to diminish the pleasures, or depreciate the sentiments of any class of the community, we know, however, what every one knows, that all cannot be judges or purchasers of works of art. Yet we have already found, by experience, that all are desirous to see an exhibition. When the terms of admission were low, the room was thronged with such multitudes, as made access dangerous, and frightened away those whose approbation was most desired.

“ Yet, because it is seldom believed that money is got but for the love of money, we shall tell the use which we intend to make of our expected profits. Many artists of great abilities are unable to sell their works for their due price:—to remove this inconvenience, an annual sale will be appointed, to which every man may send his works, and them, if he will, without his name. Those

works will be reviewed by the committee that conduct the exhibition; a price will be secretly set on every piece, and registered by the secretary; if the piece, exposed is sold for more, the whole price shall be the artist's; but if the purchasers value it at less than the committee, the artist shall be paid the deficiency from the profits of the exhibition."

Finding himself now sufficiently established to move in a higher sphere, Mr. Reynolds quitted his residence in Newport-street, and removed to Leicester-fields, where he had bought a handsome house on the west side of the square; to which he added a splendid gallery for the exhibition of his works, and a commodious and elegant room for his sitters. In this speculation, as I have heard him confess, he laid out almost the whole of the property he had then realized. He also set up a handsome carriage; and his mode of living was in other respects suitably elegant.*

With respect to this permanent residence which he fitted up in Leicester-fields, it may perhaps be gratifying to young beginners in the art to be informed of some minute particulars concerning the apparatus of a painter who was so successful, and became so illustrious in his profession.

His painting room was of an octagonal form,

* Mr. Reynolds gave a ball and refreshments to a numerous and elegant company on opening his gallery to the public.

about twenty feet long, and about sixteen in breadth. The window which gave the light to this room was square, and not much larger than one half the size of a common window in a private house, whilst the lower part of this window was nine feet four inches from the floor. The chair for his sitters was raised eighteen inches from the floor, and turned round on castors. His pallets were those which are held by a handle, not those held on the thumb. The sticks of his pencils were long, measuring about nineteen inches. He painted in that part of the room nearest to the window ; and never sat down when he worked.

The carriage which he set up, on removing to that house, was particularly splendid, the wheels were partly carved and gilt ; and on the pannels were painted the four seasons of the year, very well executed by Charles Catton, R. A., the most eminent coach-painter of his day.

The coachman frequently got money by admitting the curious to a sight of it ; and when Miss Reynolds complained that it was too shewy, Mr. Reynolds replied, “ What ! would you have one like an apothecary’s carriage ? ”

1762.

ÆTAT. 38.

IN 1762, the famous affair of the Cock-lane Ghost took place, in which Johnson acted rather a prominent part. Mr. Reynolds, however, had

too little taste for those wanderings of the imagination to join in the absurdity which gave credence to this juggling business; he therefore escaped that severity of censure which fell upon Johnson and several others.

At this time he was particularly noticed by the pen of Sterne, in the sixth volume of his *Tristram Shandy*, just then published; and there too is noticed that want of stability in the colours of Reynolds which has, in many instances, been very severely, and sometimes even unjustly, adverted to. He says, "I would not answer for my aunt Dinah was she alive—faith scarce for her picture—were it but painted by Reynolds—but if I go on with drawing, after naming that son of Apollo, I'll be shot:"—and I may also notice another compliment from Sterne;—speaking of an awkward attitude into which father Shandy had put himself, in order to reach his pocket handkerchief with his left hand, whilst he had employed his right hand in holding his wig, and which awkwardness might have been totally avoided by only taking off his wig with his left hand, and leaving his right hand at liberty for his handkerchief—"Then, his whole attitude had been easy—natural—unforced: Reynolds himself, great and graceful as he paints, might have painted him as he sat." The quotation, it is true, is not very important; yet still it serves to shew in how much respect Reynolds was held by men of genius.

On the mention of Sterne, the following circumstance comes to my recollection. Mrs. C——, a lady of considerable genius, dining one day at Reynolds's table, met Lawrence Sterne there, who, as is generally known, was as licentious in his conversation as in his writings, when this lady attacked him with so much keen wit and spirit on his immorality, that he, being already in an ill state of health, is said to have been mortified to such a degree, that his death was considerably hastened in consequence of it.

In the same year Reynolds produced the so much celebrated picture of Garrick between Tragedy and Comedy, to which there could not be a much higher compliment paid than in the opening of the Epilogue to the "Brothers," by Cumberland.

“ Who but hath seen the celebrated strife,
Where Reynolds calls the canvas into life,
And 'twixt the Tragic and the Comic muse,
Courtèd of both, and dubious which to choose,
Th' immortal actor stands.”——

For this picture the Earl of Halifax paid three hundred guineas ; but it has since been purchased, by Mr. Angerstein, for two hundred and fifty.

Mr. Garrick's intimacy with Reynolds had been now formed for some years, and it continued until the close of the former's life ; of course I had many opportunities of observing that great actor, and of acquiring a few anecdotes about him.

To give to all these their due chronological order would be an unnecessary precision ; I shall,

therefore, insert some of them in the present place, from their being particularly connected with the subject of this biography.

David Garrick sat many times to Mr. Reynolds for different portraits. At one of those sittings he gave a very lively account of his having sat once for his portrait to an indifferent painter, whom he wantonly teased; for when the artist had worked on the face till he had drawn it very correctly as he saw it at that time, Garrick caught an opportunity, whilst the painter was not looking at him, totally to change his countenance and expression, when the poor painter patiently worked on to alter the picture, and make it like what he then saw; and when Garrick perceived that it was thus altered, he seized another opportunity, and changed his countenance to a third character, which, when the poor tantalized artist perceived, he, in a great rage, threw down his pallet and pencils on the floor, saying, he believed he was painting from the devil, and would do no more to the picture.

As a contrast to the foregoing anecdote of Garrick, I remember that Mrs. Yates, the famous tragedian, when she sat for her portrait to Reynolds, said to him, "I always endeavour to keep the same expression and countenance when I sit to you, Sir; and, therefore, I generally direct my thoughts to one and the same subject."

Once, when the Bishop of St. Asaph was sitting to Reynolds, the conversation turning on

Garrick, the Bishop asked him, how it was that Garrick had not been able to make any excellent players with all his instructions? Mr. Reynolds's answer was—"Partly because they all imitate him, and then it becomes impossible: as this is like a man's resolving to go always behind another; and whilst this resolution lasts, it renders it impossible he should ever be on a par with him."

Reynolds had it long in contemplation to paint a picture of an extensive composition, purposely to display the various powers of David Garrick as an actor. The principal figure in the front was to have been a full length of Garrick, in his own proper habit, in the action of speaking a prologue, surrounded by groups of figures representing him in all the different characters, by personifying which he had gained fame on the stage.

This scheme Reynolds described to Garrick at the time he was painting his portrait; and Garrick expressed great pleasure when he heard it, and seemed to enjoy the idea prodigiously, saying, "That will be the very thing I desire; the only way, by G——, that I can be handed down to posterity."

It is much to be regretted, however, that this picture was never begun, as, from such a hand, the work would have been invaluable, supposing it even to have been left in an unfinished state. But we may conclude that Reynolds, on mature

consideration, foresaw that the subject was not eminently calculated to make a good composition for a picture.

On Sunday mornings there was always a kind of public levee at Mr. Garrick's house, where, at one time or other, all the most illustrious characters of the kingdom might be seen. On one of those public mornings, Mr. B—— W——, an eminent painter, paid a visit to Mr. Garrick, and took with him his little daughter, telling her beforehand, that he would carry her to see the greatest stage player in the world. When they were in the room, and in the midst of this splendid company, the child ran up to her father, and speaking with a voice sufficiently audible to be heard by every one there, said, "Father, father, be all these folks that I see here stage-players?" Her father was not a little disconcerted at the child's abrupt question.

Another instance of the naiveté of genius I remember, but which is much more in character than the antics practised by Goldsmith.

Garrick one day dining with a large company, soon after dinner left the room, and it was supposed had left the house; but one of the party, on going into the area to seek him, found Mr. Garrick, who had been there some time, fully occupied in amusing a negro boy who was a servant in the family, by mimicking the manner and noise of a turkey cock, which diverted the boy to

such a degree that he was convulsed with laughter, and only able now and then to utter, "Oh, Masser Garrick! You will kill me, Masser Garrick!"

When Garrick once complained to Reynolds of the daily sarcasms with which he was annoyed from Foote, the comedian, Mr. Reynolds answered, that Foote, in so doing, gave the strongest proofs possible of sensibly feeling his own inferiority; as it was always the lesser man who condescended to become malignant and abusive.

Dr. Mudge, when in Garrick's company at Mount Edgecumbe, heard him say, that his regard for his mother's peace and happiness prevented him from appearing on the stage till after her death; and that he imagined this circumstance greatly contributed to the vast success he had met with; for being then turned of thirty, his judgment was more mature, and occasioned his avoiding many errors which he might have run into had he begun earlier in life.

I also remember to have heard old Dr. Chauncey say, at Reynolds's table, that he saw Garrick at his first appearance on the stage in Goodman's-fields, at which time he was infinitely more excellent, more purely natural than afterwards, when he had acquired many stage tricks and bad habits.

I shall here close these anecdotes with a curious, though rather too severe a criticism on the manner of Garrick's performing the part of King Richard the

Third. On the morning after Garrick had appeared in that part, Gibbon the historian called on Reynolds, when he mentioned his having been at the play on the preceding evening, and immediately began to criticise Garrick's manner of acting that character. He said he thought that he gave it, in the first scenes, a mean, creeping, vulgar air, totally failing in the expression of a prince; and in the latter part so very different a cast, that it did not seem to be the same person, and therefore not in harmony as a whole.

I have had repeated occasion to record Reynolds's sentiments concerning painting; and I may add, with respect to the practice of the art, that it was his remark, that a picture given by the painter as a present was seldom considered, by the person who received it, as of much value; whilst, on the contrary, those paid for are esteemed, as their value is thereby ascertained.

That the number of gratuitous portraits by Reynolds has not been very great may therefore be accounted for upon this principle, though he did not hesitate occasionally to employ his pencil for his immediate friends: and, sometime about the year 1762, he displayed a playful yet elegant idea in a present which he made to Dr. Mudge, of the portrait of his eldest son, then about sixteen years of age, who was a clerk in the navy office in London, and of course a considerable distance from his father, who resided at Plymouth.

This portrait was painted unknown to the Doctor; and, being intended for an agreeable surprize to him, young Mudge was represented as suddenly discovering himself by drawing aside a curtain, and looking out of the canvas upon the spectator, as an unexpected visitor. The picture is exquisitely painted, and one of Reynolds's finest productions.

Shortly after, this portrait was presented to Dr. Mudge.

In the autumn of the year 1762, Mr. Reynolds having impaired his health by incessant application to his profession, again paid a visit to his native county, accompanied by his friend Dr. Johnson, with whom he was entertained at the seats of several noblemen and gentlemen in the west of England.

During their stay at Plymouth, they were the guests of Dr. John Mudge, who was then a surgeon, and afterwards an eminent physician of that town; a man whose virtues and various powers of mind, if described, would occupy a much larger space than I shall presume to give them in this short memoir.

Mr. Reynolds's friendship for the whole family, and the interest he took in whatever related to them, were of the liveliest kind. This acquaintance with the Mudges, both father and son, ought to be reckoned amongst the earliest of his literary connections.

Yet though I refrain to give way to my own grateful and friendly feelings towards this family, I hope I shall be excused in recording the testimonies of two such good judges of human nature as Burke and Johnson, upon this very subject.

In a letter which the former wrote to Mr. Malone, in the year 1797, and which I here quote from its intimate connection with the subject of my biography, he speaks of how much Reynolds owed to the writings and conversation of Johnson; adding, that “nothing shows more the greatness of Sir Joshua’s* parts than his taking advantage of both, and making some application of them to his profession; when Johnson neither understood, nor desired to understand, any thing of painting, and had no distinct idea of its nomenclature, even in those parts which had got most into use in common life. But though Johnson had done much to enlarge and strengthen his habit of thinking, Sir Joshua did not owe his first rudiments of speculation to him. He has always told me that he owed his first disposition to generalize, and to view things in the abstract, to old Mr. Zachariah Mudge, Prebendary of Exeter, and father of the celebrated mechanic of that name. I have myself,” adds Mr. Burke, “seen Mr. Mudge the clergyman at Sir Joshua’s house. He was a learned and venerable old man; and, as I thought, very much conversant in the Platonic

* This letter was written after Reynolds had been knighted.

philosophy, and very fond of that method of philosophizing. He had been originally a dissenting minister; a description which at that time bred very considerable men, both among those who adhered to it, and those who left it. He had entirely cured himself of the unpleasant narrowness which in the early part of his life had distinguished those gentlemen, and was perfectly free from the ten times more dangerous enlargement which has been, since then, their general characteristic. Sir Joshua Reynolds had always a great love for the whole of that family, and took a great interest in whatever related to them."

In addition to this, I shall insert from the periodical obituary of the day, a high eulogy bestowed upon the same individual by Johnson himself, on his demise in the year 1769. He speaks of him as "the Reverend Mr. Zachariah Mudge, prebendary of Exeter, and vicar of St. Andrew's in Plymouth;* a man equally eminent for his virtues and abilities, and at once beloved as a companion and revered as a pastor. He had that general curiosity to which no kind of knowledge is indifferent or superfluous, and that general benevolence by which no order of men is despised or hated.

"His principles, both of thought and action,

* The Reverend Zachariah Mudge was father to Mr. Thomas Mudge, the eminent mechanic, and also to Dr. John Mudge of Plymouth.

were great and comprehensive. By a solicitous examination of objections, and judicious comparison of opposite arguments, he attained what inquiry never gives but to industry and perspicuity, a firm and unshaken settlement of conviction. But his firmness was without asperity; for knowing with how much difficulty truth was sometimes found, he did not wonder that many missed it.

“ The general course of his life was determined by his profession; he studied the sacred volumes in the original languages; with what diligence and success, his Notes upon the Psalms give sufficient evidence. He once endeavoured to add the knowledge of Arabic to that of Hebrew; but finding his thoughts too much diverted from other studies, after some time desisted from his purpose.

“ His discharge of parochial duties was exemplary. How his sermons were composed, may be learned from the excellent volume which he has given to the public; but how they were delivered can be known only to those who heard them; for, as he appeared in the pulpit, words will not easily describe him. His delivery, though unconstrained was not negligent, and though forcible was not turbulent; disdaining anxious nicety of emphasis and laboured artifice of action, it captivated the hearer by its natural dignity, it roused the sluggish and fixed the volatile, and detained the mind upon the subject without directing it to the speaker.

“ The grandeur and solemnity of the preacher did not intrude upon his general behaviour ; at the table of his friends he was a companion, communicative and attentive, of unaffected manners, of manly cheerfulness, willing to please, and easy to be pleased. His acquaintance was universally solicited, and his presence obstructed no enjoyment which religion did not forbid. Though studious, he was popular ; though inflexible, he was candid ; and though metaphysical, yet orthodox.”

Such was the obituary testimony of Johnson to the memory of a man, equally and deservedly dear both to himself and to Reynolds !

In addition to this, I have myself heard Reynolds declare, that the elder Mr. Mudge was, in his opinion, the wisest man he had ever met with in his life ; and so great an admirer was he of his literary works, that he had intended to have republished his Sermons, which were out of print ; and also to have written a sketch of his life and character.—Pity it was not done by one who could have done it so well !

To return to our narrative :—Some of the occurrences which took place during this tour have been already narrated by Mr. Boswell, who informs us, that Mr. Reynolds and his friend were not only shewn every thing relative to the Dock-yard, and other parts of the naval establishment at Plymouth, with a degree of sedulous and polite atten-

tion on the part of the commissioner, but that the same officer also accommodated them with his yacht, a particular act of courtesy, for the purpose of a marine trip to the Eddystone light-house; which, however, they were prevented from examining with accuracy, from the tempestuous state of the weather.

It was about this time I first saw Reynolds, but I had seen several of his works which were in Plymouth, (for at that time I had never been out of the county,) and those pictures filled me with wonder and delight, although I was then very young; insomuch, that I remember when Mr. Reynolds was pointed out to me at a public meeting, where a great crowd was assembled, I got as near to him as I could from the pressure of the people, to touch the skirt of his coat, which I did with great satisfaction to my mind.

During their stay at Plymouth, Dr. Mudge, in conversation with Johnson, mentioned a circumstance which occurred in a most curious mode of trial, to which a friend of his, a man of undoubted veracity, had been an eye witness: Dr. Johnson desired to have it related to him by the person who saw it; on which, the gentleman being introduced to the Doctor, he repeated the circumstances, which were these:—

In some part of the East Indies, one of the natives was suspected of murder, and the mode taken to prove either his guilt or innocence was this. The

suspected criminal was brought guarded, and his hands bound, to a public place prepared for the trial, where was a large fire, over which was a cauldron of melted lead: into this vessel of melted lead he was forced to dip his naked hand, which, if he was innocent of the supposed crime, it was concluded, would receive no injury from the burning metal; but if guilty, would be destroyed. All the officers of the English man-of-war then in the harbour, and of which the gentleman who related it was the purser, were present at this extraordinary manner of trial; and the gentleman averred, that he distinctly saw the prisoner dip his hand into the melted lead, taking up some in his palm, and leisurely spilling it on the ground at his feet, without any apparent injury, or even pain to his hand. One of the English officers present had the curiosity to put a small stick, which he held in his hand, into the cauldron, and on taking it out again, found the part which had been immersed in the metal nearly consumed.

Dr. Johnson heard the narrative with much attention, and declared he would most willingly take a voyage to the East Indies, if he could be insured to be a witness to such a sight.

If there was any juggling in this affair, it cannot now be detected; but the person who saw it was unable to account for it, and the credulity of Dr. Johnson made him a very fit man to relate this story to.

During this pleasant trip to Plymouth, Reynolds, accompanied by Dr. Johnson, paid a visit to a neighbouring gentleman, when Johnson's singularity of conduct produced considerable alarm in the mind of their host; who, in order to gratify his guests, had placed before them every delicacy which the house afforded.

On this occasion, the Doctor, who seldom shewed much discretion in his feeding, devoured so large a quantity of new honey and of clouted cream, which is peculiar to Devonshire, besides drinking large potations of new cyder, that the entertainer found himself much embarrassed between his anxious regard for the Doctor's health, and his fear of breaking through the rules of politeness, by giving him a hint on the subject.

The strength of Johnson's constitution, however, saved him from any unpleasant consequences which might have been expected; but his companion, Reynolds, was more discreet in his appetite, and was much better gratified by a present for his professional palate, which their host made him of a large jar of very old nut oil, grown fat by length of time, as it had belonged to an ancestor of the family. This prize Reynolds most eagerly took home with him in the carriage, regarding it as deserving of his own personal attention.

Mr. Reynolds having completed his pleasant trip, and succeeded, in a great measure, in the restoration of his health, he returned to the metro-

polis and to the practice of his art ; indeed, the true enjoyment of a profession Reynolds possessed in as great a degree, perhaps, as any man ever did ; he never was so happy as in those hours which he passed in his painting room. He has often confessed, that when he has complied with the invitations of the nobility to spend a few days of relaxation with them at their country residences, though every luxury was afforded which the heart could desire, yet he always returned home like one who had been kept so long without his natural food.

Reynolds used to say, that “ the pupil in art, who looks for the Sunday with pleasure as an idle day, will never make a painter.”

None of his hours were ever spent in idleness, or lost in dissipation ; and on those evenings which he spent at home, after his daily occupation was past, he employed himself in looking over, and studying from, the prints of the old masters, of which he had procured a fine collection.

He was, however, happy in the friendly society of a few amiable individuals, with whom his evenings were sometimes spent ; and amongst those the Cotterells were still numbered, at whose house Johnson and he had been frequent visitors.

In a letter from Johnson to Baretti, written in December, after the return of the two friends to the metropolis, the former says, “ Reynolds still continues to increase in reputation and riches.

Miss Cotterell is still with Mrs. Porter. Miss Charlotte is married to Dean Lewis, and has three children." And in a subsequent letter, he adds, "Miss Cotterell still continues to cling to Mrs. Porter. Mr. Reynolds gets 6000 a-year."

1763.

ÆTAT. 39.

MR. REYNOLDS'S practice was now become so great, that he found it necessary to have pupils to assist in the minor parts of his profession, of which number the first - after Marchi was Mr. Beech, a native of Dorsetshire, and soon after Mr. Berridge was placed under his tuition; this gentleman was born in Lincolnshire: and his fourth pupil was Mr. Hugh Barron, whose early promise and final failure may serve as a warning to others. This person was a native of the metropolis, and born somewhere near Soho, in which vicinity his father had an official situation in the Westminster Dispensary, as apothecary to that establishment. He was placed with Mr. Reynolds, with whom he continued several years; and, on leaving him, attempted his profession as a portrait painter in the capital: but the desire of improving himself in the art induced him to visit Italy in 1773, to which country, like Reynolds he took the maritime route, and like him called at Lisbon on his way.

He made some stay there, practising his art, being much patronized by the English factory

both there and at Oporto, and then proceeded on his voyage: he seems to have been long a sojourner at the seat of the arts, principally at Rome and at Genoa, returning to England not until 1778. His first residence in London was in his old master's immediate neighbourhood, but he did not remain there long; and is since dead, (in 1791,) at the age of middle life. This person was in some degree an instance of misapplied talents; for though, as Mr. Edwards records, he was the best amateur performer of his day on the violin, yet he was never much esteemed as a painter, notwithstanding the early promise which he gave of graphic excellence whilst a youth, at the drawing-school, under the tuition of Fournier, some time about the year 1764.

His younger brother, William, about the year 1775, produced a view of Wanstead House, which was engraved by Picot, and dedicated to Sir Joshua; further particulars of him will be found in Edwards.

The instance of Mr. Barron proves the ill effects of talent when dissipated; for being divided between music and painting, he in the end became master of neither: the brevity of human life affords not time to conquer even one of those sciences, as

“ One science only will one genius fit,
So vast is art, so small is human wit;
Not only bounded to peculiar arts,
But oft in those confined to single parts.”

1764.

ÆTAT. 40.

AT his hours of leisure Mr. Reynolds considered it necessary to his mental improvement, as well as to his professional interest, to mix in learned and convivial society; and about this time, in order not only to enjoy it with freedom, but also more particularly with the kind intention of gratifying his venerable friend, he became the proposer, and with the assistance of Johnson was the founder, of that club, still perhaps in existence, and for many years denominated the "*Literary Club.*" This, however, was a title which they did not arrogate to themselves; a thing, indeed, in which Reynolds would have been the last person to join. Literary fame was but a secondary object to himself, which, if he could have acquired it, he must have shared with multitudes innumerable, and that too in a department where a decided superiority is not granted to any one in particular; besides he was too much absorbed in his professional pursuits, in which he aimed at standing alone in his own country, at least, without a rival.

His literary efforts were, therefore, merely an occasional employment, and to him only necessary as a means, in addition to his graphic works, to convey instruction: yet some judges of litera-

ture consider the former to be so much beyond what might have been expected from him, that they are very unwilling to allow them to be his own production, as I shall have cause to notice more than once. But if it were possible that those critics could ever be made sensible of his great and peculiar merits as a painter, they would surely find themselves obliged to grant him the minor ability of being able to have composed his own discourses.

If it were necessary to add any thing else to prove that he arrogated not to himself any literary eminence from the title given to that club of which he was one of the founders, it might be remarked that at that period he had only written his three papers in Johnson's *Idler*, wherefore all his possible claims to a literary character were very small, and but little known.

So far, indeed, was Mr. Reynolds from assuming the character of being a man of literature, or a wit, that I remember on his reading in a morning paper an account of a dinner given by one of his friends to a party *of wits*, as it was expressed, all of whose names were mentioned, and his own amongst the rest, he exclaimed, "Why have they named me amongst them as a wit? I never was a wit in my life!"

Reynolds as a public character, had, of course, frequent invitations, and was not an infrequent visitor at public entertainments.

I have heard him relate an anecdote of a venison feast, at which were assembled many who much enjoyed the repast.

On this occasion, Reynolds addressed his conversation to one of the company who sat next to him, but to his great surprise could not get a single word in answer, until at length his silent neighbour, turning to him, said, "Mr. Reynolds, whenever you are at a venison feast, I advise you not to speak during dinner time, as in endeavouring to answer your questions, I have just swallowed a fine piece of the fat, entire, without tasting its flavour!"

The epicures of convivial society, or the pedants of the literary, were to him equally subjects of his contemplation, but as in his literary intercourse he often met with men of first rate genius, he naturally was solicitous of their intimacy and friendship.

Whilst writing the life of the founder of the literary club, it will not be considered as out of place briefly to notice the original design which, as first declared at its institution, in February, 1764, was to confine the club to twelve members, consisting of Sir Joshua, then only Mr. Reynolds, Dr. Johnson, Drs. Goldsmith, Nugent, and Percy, afterwards Bishop of Dromore, Sir Robert Chambers and Sir John Hawkins, with Messrs. Burke, Langton, Chamier, Dyer, and the Honourable Topham Beauclerk.

These were friends so judiciously selected, as Mr. Malone observes, and were men of such talents and so well known to each other, that any two of them, if they should not happen to be joined by any more, might be good company for each other. Such was the beginning of a society which has now existed for half a century, boasting of having had enrolled, on its list of members, many of the most celebrated characters of the last century.

Sir John Hawkins though he does not expressly mention Mr. Reynolds as the founder, has, notwithstanding, entered more into detail on this subject than either Mr. Boswell or Mr. Malone; he observes, speaking of Dr. Johnson in the preceding year, (1763,) that he had now considerably extended the circle of his acquaintance, and had added to the number of his friends sundry persons of distinguished eminence; amongst whom he enumerates Reynolds and some others of the original members, and he then enters more minutely into those principles which must have weighed much with the founder, when he first thought of the plan: for he adds, that from Johnson's delight in convivial meetings, his love of conversation, and his sensible feeling of the attractions of a tavern, it was but natural that he should wish for frequent opportunities of indulging them in a way that would free him from domestic restraint, from the observance of hours, and from a conformity to family regulations. "A tavern was the place for

these enjoyments, and a weekly club was instituted for his gratification, and the mutual entertainment and delight of its several members. The first movers in this association were Johnson and Reynolds; the place of meeting was the Turk's Head in Gerard-street; the day, Monday in every week; and the hour of assembling seven, in the evening. Our evening toast," continues Sir John, "was *Esto perpetua*. A lady, distinguished by her beauty and taste for literature, (Mrs. Montague,) invited us two successive years to a dinner at her house; curiosity was her motive, and possibly a desire of intermingling with our conversation the charm of her own. She affected to consider us as a set of literary men, and perhaps gave the first occasion for distinguishing the society by the name of the *Literary Club*, a distinction which it never assumed to itself."

Mr. Boswell records an opinion of Sir Joshua's on the subject of conversation, which may be noticed in this place. When it had been proposed to add some members to the Literary Club, Goldsmith had said in favour of it, that it would give the club an agreeable variety, that there could now be nothing new among the members, and that they had travelled over each other's minds; to which Johnson answered, "Sir, you have not travelled over *my* mind I promise you!" When Reynolds was afterwards told of this, he agreed with Goldsmith, saying that "when people have lived a

great deal together, they know what each of them will say on the subject. A new understanding, therefore, is desirable; because, though it may only furnish the same sense upon a question which would have been furnished by those with whom we are accustomed to live, yet this sense will have a different colouring; and colouring is of much effect in every thing else as well as in painting.”

I have not specifically noticed the admirable whole length picture which Reynolds painted of the late Mrs. Abington in the character of the Comic Muse, and which is now in the possession of the Dorset family;* but I may here observe, that Mrs. Abington was not only by far the most eminent performer in comedy of her day, and therefore most proper to be the representative of Thalia, but has perhaps never been surpassed in any time. She was also esteemed at that period as a person of most exquisite taste, and, like a woman of superior abilities, had ever a great ambition to be noticed by men eminent for their genius; therefore on her benefit nights she always endeavoured to collect as many distinguished persons, particularly of this Literary Club, as was in her power, in order to add dignity to her audience, taking care to place them in the most conspicuous situation in the house.

* Placed in the gallery at Knole Park, which contains a curious collection of portraits of eminent persons of all descriptions.

Accordingly Mr. Reynolds, Dr. Johnson, Dr. Goldsmith, Edmund Burke, and many others of like eminence, rarely failed attending her performances on such evenings, in which her favourite character was that of Estifania, in "Rule a Wife and Have a Wife."

She, however, much offended Goldsmith, at last, by refusing to take the part which he had written on purpose for her, in his Comedy of "She stoops to Conquer," which character was, of necessity, performed by another actress, to Goldsmith's great mortification, on the first night's representation.

Having thus slightly noticed matters that may be considered as events not wholly unimportant in the life of Reynolds, I may further add of this year, as connected with the arts, that in the month of April was opened the exhibition of Painting, Sculpture, and Architecture, at the Great Room in Spring Gardens, as it had been in the two preceding years, but now with an addition of many of those exhibitors, who, until this period, had continued annually to exhibit at the original place, the great room belonging to the Society for the Encouragement of Arts, Manufactures, and Commerce, then situated nearly opposite to Beaufort Buildings in the Strand. But that society finding that the artists who had intended to continue with them began to diminish in numbers, and also that their exhibition interfered with the other con-

cerns of the society, they no longer indulged them with the use of their room, and consequently the exhibitions at that place terminated in that year.

This extended and ample exhibition at Spring Gardens had, however, originated from the union of all the artists in the metropolis, as before noticed, in the year 1760; and the success of their exhibitions having given them sufficient encouragement, they now also seriously proposed to incorporate themselves, and accordingly drew up a plan of a charter, at that time, which was granted to them in the following year.

It may not be foreign to my purpose, for the information of general readers, to take some notice of the royal charter of incorporation of this establishment, particularly as it has been entirely passed over by former biographers.

This charter then was given to the "Society of Artists of Great Britain," to consist of a president, vice-president, directors, and fellows, to be for ever after a body corporate, with perpetual succession, and with power to enjoy lands in perpetuity, either by purchase or devise, to the yearly value of £1000, notwithstanding the statute of mortmain. Their arms, or corporation seal, consisted of azure, a brush, a chissel, and a pair of compasses, composed fretty, or; over these, in chief, a regal crown proper. This coat had two supporters: on the dexter side, Britannia; on the sinister, Concord. The crest was on a wreath, an oak branch, and a

palm branch in saltire, and in the centre of these, a chaplet of laurel. This common seal too, a thing very unusual in heraldic grants, they had liberty to break, alter, or change the same, from time to time, as they thought fit.

It was further stipulated, that all the officers, together with the directors, should be either painters, sculptors, architects, or engravers, by profession.

The charter further authorized them to hold meetings for the better improvement of those arts, in London, or within ten miles thereof, as often as it might be necessary.

Mr. Lambert was the first president, and Mr. Hayman his vice; Messrs. Dalton and Newton were the first treasurer and secretary; the other members of the direction were Sir William Chambers, Messrs. Mac Ardell, Barret, Collins, Cotes, Grignion, Gwyn, Hone, Meyer, Moser, Payne, Penny, Rooker, Sandby, Seaton, Tyler, Wall, Wilson, Wilton, and Yeo.

As the events which gave rise to this establishment are intimately connected with the present Royal Academy, in its progress and foundation, I cannot give a better view of them, in part, than is afforded by the slight sketch drawn up in the year 1766, by Mr. John Gwyn, an ingenious architectural writer, in his "London and Westminster Improved."

He observes, that Sir Peter Lely and Sir God-

frey Kneller kept up the national passion with great success ; and some public works, which required decorations, gave opportunity to Sir James Thornhill and others, to shew, that historical painting, if properly encouraged, was a field in which the British nation might engage with their competitors, not without advantage : but notwithstanding this advancement of the art of painting, and the number of ingenious professors who continually advanced in every branch, neither painting, nor professors of painting, were known, distinguished, or encouraged. The few, indeed, who had taste and discernment, sought for these ingenious men, and purchased their works ; but the public knew them not, nor did they know each other : they had no society or intercourse with their fellow artists, consequently had very little to say in each other's recommendation, in the different branches of painting ; and (he who had the greatest acquaintance, whatever were his abilities, was sure to get the most money.) However, the natural good sense and ingenuity of the British nation continued still to furnish very able masters ; and these, at length, collected their scattered and dispersed brethren, and formed a little society, who, wisely considering their mutual interest, by a voluntary subscription among themselves, established an academy in St. Martin's-lane.

The establishment of the Foundling Hospital, which was a national concern, and attracted the

notice of the public in a very particular manner, gave an opportunity, when finished, for displaying a scene entirely new to this nation. The Hospital was just in its infancy, and elegant decorations, and every possible means that could allure or draw the attention of the public towards its support and maintenance, were found necessary; but the expense of such ornaments could not be afforded by a charity whose utmost abilities were demanded for the succour and support of deserted perishing infants. In order to contribute to the support of this useful establishment, and to shew at once that ingenuity and compassion for the distresses of human nature are usually found to reside in the same person, the most considerable artists in Great Britain nobly and generously united in bestowing a great number of excellent performances, in painting and sculpture, which embellished the Hospital, entertained the public, and, at the same time convinced the world that painting was arrived to a degree of perfection in this kingdom, of which, until this era, they had no conception. The Governors of the Hospital, convinced of the use and benefit which accrued to the charity from these truly valuable donations, and desirous of improving a connection so very advantageous to them, encouraged the several contributors, and also the whole body of those who professed the polite arts, to have an annual meeting at the Hospital, on the fifth of November: these meetings drew together

the most ingenious artists from every quarter, and at one of them it was proposed to the whole body, to have an annual exhibition of such performances as should be judged worthy the notice of the public.

A proposal so very advantageous to merit of every kind, could not fail of being received with applause, and was unanimously agreed to. In consequence of this resolution, application was made to the Society of Arts, Manufactures, and Commerce, who, taking it into consideration, rightly judged, that an exhibition of this nature could not be carried into execution with so much propriety as under their patronage; they complied, therefore, willingly, with this request, and, in the year 1760, the first exhibition of the artists of Great Britain was made, and another the year following; but as every member of the society was at liberty to distribute what number of tickets for admittance he thought fit, that which was intended only as a polite entertainment and rational amusement for the public, became a scene of tumult and disorder; and to such a height was the rage of visiting the exhibition carried, that, when the members themselves had satisfied their own curiosity, the room was crowded, during the hours allotted for the exhibition, with menial servants and their acquaintance. This prostitution of the polite arts undoubtedly became extremely disagreeable to the professors themselves, who heard,

alike, with indignation, their works censured or approved by kitchen-maids and stable-boys; but the cause of the final separation, (for this abuse might have been remedied,) of the artists of Great Britain from the Society, was this: it had been, and still is, usual for the Society to give premiums for historical and landscape painting; these rewards were usually adjudged among the competitors some little time before the exhibition began, and as those who gained the premiums were obliged to leave their pictures a limited time with the Society, they were, of course, sure to be in the exhibition. The great inconvenience of this method of proceeding was soon discovered by several of the most eminent painters, whose reputations were already so eminently established as to prevent their becoming candidates for a trifling premium; these, therefore, as their characters were so nearly concerned, very justly objected to the continuation of this custom, for the following obvious reason: it was generally known that the Society had determined premiums for several pictures, and it was natural enough for persons who knew nothing of the matter to inquire, upon entering the room, which of the pieces, among that profusion of art, were those that had obtained the premium? and, being satisfied in this particular, they very innocently concluded, for want of better judgement, that these had obtained the prize from *all* the rest, and, consequently, were the *best* pictures. Had

it been possible to have confined this injurious decision to the vulgar spectators, it would have been a thing of no consequence ; but, unfortunately for the arts, many in a much higher sphere of life were liable to be led away by the same opinion ; and therefore, as the society would not give up the point, a separation ensued, and every succeeding exhibition has been made at the room in Spring Gardens. The prodigious encouragement given to it, and the applause bestowed on the several performances, by persons of the greatest taste and distinction, evidently shew what a prodigious progress has been made in the arts, as well as what great expectations may be formed of what will probably be done by concurring incitements of applause and emulation, and the effects of society and concord. The success of the exhibition, and the harmony which subsisted among the exhibitors, naturally led them to the thoughts of soliciting an establishment, and forming themselves into a body: in consequence of which solicitation, his Majesty was most graciously pleased to grant them his Royal Charter, incorporating them by the name of the Society of Artists of Great Britain ; which charter bears date the 26th day of January, 1765, and is the one of which I have given the preceding sketch.

In the summer of this year a violent and very dangerous illness attacked Mr. Reynolds, which had nearly deprived his associates of one of

the best of friends, and the world of one of its brightest ornaments.

His illness, however, was but of short duration, and his recovery was cheered by the following affectionate letter from Dr. Johnson, then on a visit in Northamptonshire :

“ TO JOSHUA REYNOLDS, ESQ., IN LEICESTER-FIELDS,
LONDON.

“ DEAR SIR,

“ I did not hear of your sickness, till I heard, likewise, of your recovery, and therefore escaped that part of your pain which every man must feel to whom you are known as you are known to me. Having had no particular account of your disorder, I know not in what state it has left you. If the amusement of my company can exhilarate the languor of a slow recovery, I will not delay a day to come to you ; for I know not how I can so effectually promote my own pleasure as by pleasing you, or my own interest as by preserving you ; in whom, if I should lose you, I should lose almost the only man whom I call a friend. Pray let me hear of you from yourself, or from dear Miss Reynolds. Make my compliments to Mr. Mudge.*

“ I am, dear Sir,

“ Your most affectionate, and

“ Most humble servant,

SAM. JOHNSON.

“ At the Rev. Mr. Percy’s, at Easton-Maudit,
Northamptonshire, (by Castle Ashby) August 19, 1764.”

* Mr. Mudge happened to be at that time in London on a visit.

In 1764, the world and the art lost Hogarth, who died on the 26th of October, at the age of sixty-seven.

At the time, a silly report was propagated by a party, that his death was accelerated by that most severe and cruel poetical epistle, addressed to him by the well known Charles Churchill in consequence of a quarrel that took place from a difference of opinion in politics. In that satire, the poet supposes Hogarth to be in his dotage, and with affected pity laments his fallen state and loss of powers, and concludes with a compliment to Reynolds, saying,

“ The greatest genius to this fate may bow,
Reynolds, in time, may be like Hogarth now !”

I may add, that this illustrious painter had a weakness, from which, indeed, even the great Shakespeare was not exempt, that of a fondness for a pun ; one specimen of which I have heard related by Reynolds.

A party of painters, of whom Hogarth was one, were looking at a picture painted by Allan Ramsay, but were not able to ascertain who was the artist, being all in doubt, with the exception of Hogarth, who soon set them right, by saying, “ Don't you see clearly in the picture the Ram's eye ?”

Another of his foibles, it is well known, was the excessive high opinion he held of his own abilities ;

for when he was engaged in his work of the *Marriage à la mode*, he said to Reynolds, " I shall very soon be able to gratify the world with such a sight as they have never seen equalled ! "

Hogarth has never been admitted to rank high as a painter, but certainly so as a moralist ; yet it has, of late, been discovered, that his small pictures possess considerable dexterity of execution : as to his large pieces, they appear to be the efforts of imbecility ; he was totally without the practice required for such works.

The best lesson, indeed the only one I believe, by which we can learn to paint small pictures in a grand style, is, first to gain experience by executing well in the full size of nature, or even larger ; and as a proof of this assertion, it may be remarked that there are no instances now to be found in the world of any small pictures possessing the true properties of the grand style, except by those painters who have been accustomed to work on a large scale : for it is only in large pictures that the indispensable necessity exists of marking out with precision and distinctness all the parts ; such precision as is not to be found nor required in the smaller size, as small pictures never proceed much beyond sketches. This is the true reason why those, who are painters of small pictures only, cannot paint in a large size.

Nothing in art is more distinguishable than the difference between the small pictures by the pain-

ters of large works, and the small pictures by those who never did any other kind, or had never practised in works of the full size of nature: and so convinced have I always been of this as a truth, that, from the mortifying reflection that small pictures only are saleable and commodious in this country, I have often thought it advisable, in respect to worldly advantage, to execute such; but in that case to follow this severe and laborious method; that is, first, to finish the subject in the full size of life, and afterwards copy it in small, by which means may be obtained that style of breadth and grandeur to be found in the pictures of great masters even when painted in a small size. The original may be then destroyed, if you please, it being an unprofitable article which nobody will purchase.

As an instance of the imbecility of those painters, when painting large pictures, who have been accustomed to paint only in a small size, there is now to be seen an attempt by Nicolo Poussin. The subject of the picture is the martyrdom of St. Erasmus; and it is placed in one of the smaller Chapels of St. Peter's Church at Rome. The figures are the full size of life: but this picture is executed in so little a manner, and without those broad masses of light and shadow so absolutely necessary to give distinctness and effect to a picture when seen from a distance, that it appears weak and indistinct when viewed beyond the steps

of the altar, and the spectator is puzzled to discover what is the subject, or even one figure from another: yet the picture is not without the merit of good drawing and anatomical knowledge.

But with regard to familiar scenes, Dutch drolls, and comic subjects of every kind, they ought, on no account, or pretence whatsoever, to assume a size of any magnitude, as, by so doing, they give up their interesting quality of a refined toy to become a nuisance; even in the rich luxuriance of Rubens in his Bacchanalian scenes, although executed with the highest powers of mechanic art, we cannot but view the subject with some degree of displeasure, from the impropriety of the size alone in which they are represented, as such subjects are only fitted for canvas of smaller dimensions.

1765.

ÆTAT. 41.

IN 1765 Mr. Reynolds exhibited a whole length portrait of Lady Sarah Bunbury, in which she is represented as sacrificing to the Graces. Previous to this he had painted an excellent whole length portrait of Lady Elizabeth Keppel, in the dress she wore as bridemaids to the Queen;* and in the same exhibition he had another portrait of Lady

* Exhibited in the year 1762, at the Great Room, Spring Gardens.

Waldegrave; of which Mr. Barry, in a letter to Dr. Sleigh, says—"We have had two exhibitions since I wrote to you: the pictures that struck me most were Lady Sarah Bunbury sacrificing to the Graces, and Lady Waldegrave. They are some of Mr. Reynold's best works, which is the greatest character they can have."

Barry gives testimony in favour of Reynolds's merits, in another letter to Dr. Sleigh, written in the same year, which was soon after his arrival in London, for the first time, from his native kingdom, Ireland, wherein he says, "———To avoid too great a trespass on your patience, I proposed breaking off with taking notice of the great advance of portrait painting since it got into the hands of Mr. Reynolds; but as you have seen his pictures when you were in England, no one is more capable of discerning the greatness and delicacy of his style, the propriety of his characters, his great force of light and shadow, and taste of colouring."

Very soon after the above was written, Barry was enabled, by the munificence of the Burkes, to set out on his tour of France and Italy: and on another occasion, still in the same year, he wrote from Paris to Mr. Burke; when, whilst speaking of the paintings at Versailles, he said, "What I have seen since, gives me more and more reason to admire Mr. Reynolds: you know my sentiments of him already, and the more I know

and see of the art, the less likely they are to change.”

As it may afford some idea of the degree in which the arts were, at this period, held by the public in England, I shall here give the following anecdote, in regard to historical painting.

It was not long after the arrival of Mr. West in this country, from his studies in Italy, that he displayed his powers in historical painting in a most excellent picture ; the subject of which was that of Pylades and Orestes, one of his very best works.

As any attempt in history was, at that period, an almost unexampled effort, this picture became a matter of much surprise. His house was soon filled with visitors from all quarters to see it ; and those amongst the highest rank, who were not able to come to his house to satisfy their curiosity, desired his permission to have it sent to them ; nor did they fail, every time it was returned to him, to accompany it with compliments of the highest commendation on its great merits. But the most wonderful part of the story is, that, notwithstanding all this vast bustle and commendation, bestowed upon this justly admired picture, by which Mr. West's servant gained upwards of thirty pounds for showing it, yet no one mortal ever asked the price of the work, or so much as offered to give him a commission to paint any other subject. Indeed there was one gentleman so

highly delighted with the picture, and who spoke of it with such great praise to his father, that he immediately asked him the reason he did not purchase, as he so much admired it, when he answered—"What could I do, if I had it?—you would not surely have me hang up a modern English picture in my house, unless it was a portrait?"

It was in this year that Johnson's edition of Shakspeare made its appearance; and even for this the world is much obliged to Reynolds. Mr. Boswell tells us, that in 1756 the Doctor had resumed his scheme of giving that work with notes, and had even published proposals, in which he promised that it should be perfected by Christmas 1757, but that his habitual indolence had prevented him from pursuing the system of research necessary for such an undertaking. Sir John Hawkins also notices particularly that a reverend divine (Churchill) had exhibited him to ridicule in a satirical poem, and revived the remembrance of that engagement to the public, "which by this and other instances of the laxity of his mind, he seemed not inclined to fulfil."

This was about 1760; but, as Hawkins adds, although Johnson was insensible to the abuse, yet his friends took the alarm, and by all the arts of persuasion and reasoning, endeavoured to convince him that his credit was at stake, in having yet made no progress in a work, for which he had already taken subscriptions.

The true reason to be given for the delay of this work is, that Johnson had undertaken it at a period when he was obliged to be a literary drudge for his livelihood, and merely on account of the profits it would afford him:—but it never was an object of his desire. In the mean time, he became possessed of the pension of three hundred per annum from the bounty of his present Majesty, and therefore, that task, which before was undertaken from necessity only, now became loathsome to him, and he could not summon up sufficient resolution to go on with the work, although he had engaged himself to the public by having received subscriptions for it. He indeed confessed that he was culpable, and made promises, from time to time, that he would commence the necessary course of reading: but even now his best friends trembled for his fulfilment of these promises; nor was it until Reynolds, and some others of his friends, contrived to entangle him in a wager for its performance at a given period, that he could be prevailed to sit down to it in earnest. These friendly exertions, however, had the best effect, and at length, in 1765, the work was produced.

I make no doubt that Reynolds, in order to encourage Johnson in the business, at the same time offered to furnish him with a few notes on the text of Shakspeare, which he faithfully performed; and as these notes serve to show the clearness of

perception and mode of thinking in Reynolds, it is surely requisite to insert them in this place.

In Macbeth, act the first, scene the sixth, in the dialogue between the King and Banquo, is this passage—

King. “ This castle hath a pleasant seat ; the air
Nimble and sweetly recommends itself
Unto our gentle senses.

Ban. This guest of summer,
The temple-haunting martlet, does approve,
By his lov'd mansionry, that the heav'n's breath
Smells wooingly. Here is no jetty frieze,
Buttrice, nor coigne of vantage, but this bird
Hath made his pendant bed and procreant cradle:
Where they most breed and haunt, I have observ'd
The air is delicate.”

On which Reynolds observes, “ This short dialogue between Duncan and Banquo, whilst they are approaching the gates of Macbeth's castle, has always appeared to me a striking instance of what in painting is termed *repose*. This conversation very naturally turns upon the beauty of its situation, and the pleasantness of the air; and Banquo, observing the martlets' nests in every recess of the cornice, remarks, that wh. whose birds most breed and haunt the air is delicate. The subject of quiet and easy conversation gives that repose so necessary to the mind after the tumultuous bustle of the preceding scenes, and perfectly contrasts the scene of horror that immediately succeeds. It seems as if Shakspeare asked himself,

what is a prince likely to say to his attendants on such an occasion? Whereas, the modern writers seem, on the contrary, to be always searching for new thoughts—such as would never occur to men in the situation which is represented. — This, also, is frequently the practice of Homer, who, from the midst of battles and horrors, relieves and refreshes the mind of the reader, by introducing some quiet rural image, or picture of familiar domestic life.”

On this note, the following observation has been made in a late edition by Mr. Malone, which, although expressing a difference of opinion, is yet highly complimentary to Reynolds.—“ It is not without reluctance that I express my dissent from the friend whose name is subscribed to the preceding note; whose observations on all subjects of criticism and taste are so ingenious and just, that posterity may be at a loss to determine, whether his consummate skill and execution in his own art, or his judgement in that and other kindred arts, were superior.”

In Othello, act first, scene third, the Duke says:

“ Let me speak like yourself; and lay a sentence,
Which, as a guise or step, may help these lovers
Into your favour.”

The Duke then proceeds to repeat a variety of proverbs in rhyming distichs; on which Johnson says in a note, “ The Duke seems to mean, when

he says he will speak like Brabantio, that he will speak sententiously.”

But Reynolds was of opinion, that Shakspeare here meant something further ; for Brabantio was father of Desdemona, and the Duke was endeavouring to reconcile him to her marriage with the Moor : he therefore adds, “ i. e. let me speak as yourself would speak, were you not too much heated with passion.”

Perhaps the Poet might have also wished to say, or to imply, “ Hear me now say what you ought to say ;—let me repeat those wise proverbs of which you are so fond, and whose wisdom ought now to regulate your feelings.”

In the same scene Brabantio says :

“ But words are words ; I never yet did hear
That the bruis'd heart was *pierced* through the ear.”

On this passage Warburton had observed, that “ the Duke had, by sage sentences, been exhorting Brabantio to patience, and to forget the grief of his daughter's stolen marriage : to which Brabantio is made very pertinently to reply, to this effect, ‘ My Lord, I apprehend very well the wisdom of your advice ; but though you would comfort me, words are but words ; and the heart, already bruised, was never pierced, or wounded, through the ear.’ It is obvious, that the text must be restored thus :

That the bruised heart was *pieced* through the ear.

That is, that the wounds of sorrow were never cured, or a man made *heart-whole*, merely by the words of consolation."

Next comes Mr. Stevens, who treats the bruised heart first surgically, and then applies a black letter plaister to the wound. "Pierced may be right. The consequence of a bruise is sometimes matter collected, and this can no way be cured without *piercing* or letting it out. Thus in *Hamlet*:

"It will but skin and film the ulcerous place,
Whiles rank corruption, mining all within,
Infects unseen."

Again,

"This is th' imposthume of much wealth and peace,
That inward breaks, and shows no cause without,
Why the man dies."

What reference these passages can possibly have to the point in question, I will not pretend to say; and indeed Mr. Stevens himself seems to have doubted there being a cure for this *imbroglio* of the bruised heart; he therefore adds—"Our author might have had in his memory the following quaint title of an old book; *i. e.* 'A Lytell Treatyse called the Dysputacyon, or the Complaynte of the Harte through perced with the lokyng of the eye. Imprinted at London, in Flete-strete, at y^e sygne of the Sonne, by Wynkin de Worde.'

"Again, in a 'Newe and a Mery Interlude, concerning Pleasure and Payne in Love, made by Jhon Heywood: fol. Rastel. 1634.

“Thorough myne erys dyrectly to myne harte
Percyth his wordys evyn lyke as many sperys.”

After all this display of ingenuity and research, Reynolds expresses himself thus on the subject with simplicity and good sense.

“Shakspeare was continually changing his first expression for another, either stronger or more uncommon;* so that very often the reader who has not the same continuity, or succession of ideas, is at a loss for his meaning: many of Shakspeare’s uncouth strained epithets may be explained by going back to the obvious and simple expression, which is most likely to occur to the mind in that state. I can imagine the first mode of expression that occurred to the poet was this:

“The *troubled* heart was never cured by words.”

To give it poetical force he altered the phrase:

“The wounded heart was never reached through the ear.”

Wounded heart he changed to *broken*, and that to *bruised*, as a more common expression. *Reached* he altered to *touched*, and the transition is then easy to *pierced*; *i. e.* throughly *touched*: when the sentiment is brought to this state, the commentator, without this unravelling clue, expounds *piercing the heart* in its common acceptation

* I cannot entirely agree with Reynolds, that Shakspeare was continually changing his first expression for another. It is said, and with more appearance of probability, that he never blotted out a line.

wounding the heart, which making in this place nonsense, is corrected to *pierced the heart*, which is very stiff, and, as Polonius says, *is a vile phrase.*" This note seems to have been the foundation for Malone's subsequent, and more copious, illustration of the passage.

On a subsequent passage in the same play, in the first scene of the fourth act, where Othello, in his jealousy, exclaims, "Nature would not invest herself in such shadowing passion without some instruction. It is no words that shake me thus—pish—noses, ears, and lips—is't possible!—confess!—handkerchief!—O devil!"—*[Falls in a trance]* Warburton says, that "The starts and broken reflections in this speech have something very terrible, and show the mind of the speaker to be in inexpressible agonies. But the words we are upon, when set right, have a sublime in them that can never be enough admired. The ridiculous blunder of writing *instruction* for *induction*, (for so it should be read,) has, indeed, sunk it into arrant nonsense. Othello is just going to fall into a swoon; and, as is common for people in that circumstance, feels an unusual mist and darkness, accompanied with horror, coming upon him. This, with vast sublimity of thought, is compared to the season of the sun's eclipse, at which time the earth becomes shadowed by the *induction* or bringing over of the moon between it and the sun. This being the allusion,

the reasoning stands thus—‘My nature could never be thus overshadowed, and falling, as it were, into dissolution, for no cause. There must be an *induction* of something; there must be a real cause. My jealousy cannot be merely imaginary. Ideas, *words* only could not shake me thus, and raise all this disorder. My jealousy, therefore, must be grounded on matter of fact.’—Shakspeare uses the same word in the same sense in King Richard the Third:

“A dire induction am I witness to.”

“Marston seems to have read it thus in some copy, and to allude to it in these words of Fame:

“Plots ha’ you laid? inductions dangerous.”

Reynolds, in his note upon this passage, observes, that, “However ingenious Dr. Warburton’s note may be, it is certainly too forced and far-fetched. Othello alludes only to Cassio’s dream, which had been invented and told him by Iago. When many confused and very interesting ideas pour in upon the mind all at once, and with such rapidity that it has not time to shape or digest them, if it does not relieve itself by tears, (which we know it often does, whether for joy or grief,) it produces stupefaction and fainting.

“Othello, in broken sentences, and single words, all of which have a reference to the cause of his jealousy, shews, that all the proofs are present at once to his mind, which so overpowers it, that he falls into a trance, the natural consequence.”

1766.

ÆTAT. 42.

DOCTOR FARMER, of Cambridge, had written a most excellent and convincing pamphlet to prove that Shakspeare knew little or nothing of the ancients but by translations. Being in company with Dr. Johnson, he received from him the following compliment upon the work : “ Dr. Farmer,” said Johnson, “ you have done that which never was done before ; that is, you have completely finished a controversy beyond all further doubt.” “ I thank you,” answered Dr. Farmer, “ for your flattering opinion of my work, but still think there are some critics who will adhere to their old opinions ; certain persons that I could name.”

“ Ah !” said Johnson, “ that may be true : for the limbs will quiver and move when the soul is gone.”

Whether Shakspeare knew much or nothing of the ancients, may have been decided by Dr. Farmer ; but who can decide on which part would have been the greatest gain ; That of Shakspeare in having known the ancients, or the ancients in having known Shakspeare.

Dr. Farmer has been long celebrated as a man particularly well informed on the subject of old English literature ; and, as a man of learning, was, therefore, always an acceptable guest with Mr. Reynolds. He was a native of Leicester, and

nearly of the same age with his friend ; and having completed his education at Cambridge, he entered into orders, serving a curacy at a village near that university for many years, whilst a tutor at Emanuel College : but his appointment, in 1767, as a preacher at Whitehall, gave him frequent opportunities of residence in London, where he became a distinguished book collector.

Dr. Askew, of Queen's-square, was particularly attached to him and, being himself a man of learning, gave him a most hospitable reception at his house ; where he first met Mr. Reynolds along with several others of the distinguished characters of the day.

With these two he mixed much in evening society ; so much so, indeed, that when offered a bishopric by Mr. Pitt, so strong was his wish to associate without restraint, " and to enjoy himself without responsibility," that, as he said to a friend, " one that enjoyed the theatre and the Queen's Head in the evening, would have made but an indifferent bishop." He was therefore a member of several clubs, particularly one in Essex-street, founded by Johnson ; the unincreasable club at the Queen's Head in Holborn, where he met Hayley, Romney, Topham, Newbery, and others ; and the Eumelian club, held at the Blenheim Tavern, in Bond-street, of which Mr. Reynolds himself was a member, together with Messrs. Boswell, Windham, Knight, North, Burney, Seward, and

many other highly respectable and much esteemed public characters.

It is not here irrelevant to notice, that it was owing to his good sense and good taste (whilst canon residentiary of St. Paul's) that his colleagues were induced to admit the ornaments of sculpture into that cathedral. Had such a man been concerned in the direction of that edifice, when it was proposed to decorate it with the efforts of the graphic art, how easily would a new and permanent source of encouragement have been established? one too, most certainly no less consonant with the principles of the Protestant religion than the productions of the sculptor.

In a letter written by Mr. Burke to Barry, then at Rome, in the year 1766, I find some observations of Mr. Reynolds's recorded, which deserve insertion here.

He says, "Reynolds was dining with me when the pictures arrived, (meaning those by Barry, painted at Rome, and sent to Mr. Burke,) and I will tell you fairly what he said.

"He declared the drawing to be perfectly correct, the expression just and noble: Alexander's attention, and the physician's unaffected manner, could not, he said, be better. In regard to the colouring, he said he did not wish it other than it was. That colouring was a knack acquired by habit and experiment; that nothing, however, could be more dangerous to a young painter than

to indulge himself in that glare of colour which catches the eye, and imposes on the imperfect judgement. I do not at all suppose that his opinion is, that colouring is an idle or useless part of your art; but, if I apprehend him right, I think his opinion is, that to begin with a wish of excelling in colour is to begin at the wrong end of the art."

"As our conversation naturally dwelt on painting, I found that Reynolds's expectation of what would be your great object of attention were the works of Michael Angelo, whom he considers as the Homer of Painting: I could find that his own study had been much engrossed by that master, whom he still admires the most. He mentioned, indeed, his having, for some months, confined himself to the Capella Sistina, and begged me to desire you to let us know the effect it has on you when you give it your attention," &c.

In a subsequent letter, he observes, "I thank you for Alexander; Reynolds sets a high esteem upon it; he thinks it admirably drawn, and with great spirit. He had it at his house for some time, and returned it in a very fine frame; and it, at present, makes a capital ornament of our little drawing-room, between the two doors." Again, speaking of domestic news, he says—

"Here they are (the painters) as you left them; Reynolds every now and then striking out some wonder."

In this year, Reynolds painted a very excellent three-quarter portrait of Mrs. Collyer, an eminent beauty of that time, and from which there is a mezzotinto print taken by J. Watson. The face is seen in profile, and has a pensive air, as if contemplating the death of a favorite sparrow, which appears laid on the table before her. The lines under the print are from Catullus :

Passer mortuus est meæ puellæ;
 Passer delitiæ meæ puellæ;
 Quem plus illa oculis suis amabat.

The following couplets were written by a gentleman of Devonshire, a friend of Mr. Reynolds's, (and who knew the lady,) on seeing the picture—

Sorrow too deep for him to trace,
 Timanthes did conceal;
 The anguish in the Father's face,
He covered with a veil.

The light'ning of bright Collyer's eyes
 Reynolds despairs to show;
 That vivid fire his art defies;
He bids a tear to flow.

In 1766, Reynolds had the honor to paint the portrait of the late unfortunate Queen of Denmark, sister to his present Majesty, immediately before her departure from this country for that kingdom. But the execution of this picture was attended with considerable embarrassment, in respect to making it a pleasant performance; for this unhappy princess, at the times of her sitting for the portrait, was generally in tears, as if impressed with a presentiment of her future misfortunes.

I do not know who is the possessor of this picture, or at whose request it was painted; but there is a mezzotinto print taken from it.

There is now in the royal palace of Trianon, near Paris, an historical picture by Reynolds, which he painted about the period under our present revision, the size rather less than that of a whole length canvas; it represents the subject of Abraham and Isaac. This must have been one of his earliest attempts at historical painting; but how it has got into its present situation in France I do not know, as it is a very rare thing for English paintings to appear beyond the limits of the realm. It is evident, however, from its preservation, that its possessors have been liberal enough to allow *some* merit to British art.

1767.

ÆTAT. 43.

IN the regular exhibition of this year, Mr. Reynolds did not produce a single effort of his pencil; yet even here he afforded a proof that merit will always be exposed to the little attacks of malice; for Burke observes in a letter to Barry, dated the 26th of April, 1767, “ Jones, who used to be poet-laureat to the exhibition, is prepared to be a severe and almost general satirist upon the exhibitors. His ill behaviour has driven him from all their houses, and he resolves to take revenge in this manner. He has endeavoured to find out

what pictures they will exhibit, and upon such information as he has got, has before-hand given a poetic description of those pictures which he has not seen. I am told he has gone so far as to abuse Reynolds, at guess, as an exhibitor of several pictures, though he does not put in one. This is a very moral poet."

The reason of his apparent inattention to the exhibition this year, is afterwards explained by Burke, saying, "The exhibition will be opened to-morrow. Reynolds, though he has, I think, some better portraits than he ever before painted, does not think mere heads sufficient, and having no piece of fancy finished, sends in nothing this time."*

In a subsequent letter from the same pen, in August, we find, "As to Reynolds, he is perfectly well, and still keeps that superiority over the rest, which he always had from his genius, sense, and morals."

* Amongst those specimens which Burke alluded to, Sir Joshua had painted one particularly fine, a three-quarter size of George Colman, sen., which picture is now in the possession of the Earl of Mulgrave; it was painted in the winter season, and the colours, from the dampness of the atmosphere, would not harden, for which reason, Sir Joshua placed the picture very close to the fire, in order to dry it more expeditiously. In the mean time, a sudden gust of wind rushed down the chimney, and unluckily, as was at first considered, sprinkled the picture all over with soot and dust, which it was impossible to brush entirely off, as the colours were still damp as when first laid upon the canvas. This accident has therefore given it a darker hue of colour, but without any diminution of harmony or effect.

I may mention in this place, that Mr. Parry was a pupil of Mr. Reynolds some time before the year 1767, being then also a student at the academy in St. Martin's-lane: his early initiation into the art having commenced at Shipley's drawing-school, and been continued in the gallery of the Duke of Richmond, so nobly and generously established for the furtherance of taste, and the development of genius.

It is recorded of him, however, that his early excellence, or rather the praises bestowed on it, together with the premiums awarded by the Society for the encouragement of Arts, for his drawings from antique models, and also from the life, had the unpleasant effect of relaxing his studies and exertions, instead of stimulating him to attempt approaching nearer to perfection.

After finishing his term with Mr. Reynolds he retired to Wales, where he was invited by the late munificent Sir Watkyn Williams Wynne, who was his steady patron, and assisted him in his proposed plan of studying at Rome, whither he went in the year 1770; returning five years afterwards to England, when he attempted to settle in his profession in the metropolis, taking a house in Duke-street, St. James's. Having married Miss Keene, daughter of the architect of that name, he was affected so much by some unhappy family occurrences, as to retire from the metropolis soon after, and to settle at his former Welsh residence,

where, however, he remained but a short time; the loss of his wife, who died in parturition of her only child, having induced him, once more, to visit Rome, and leave what may properly be called his natal country; for, though born in London, he was yet of Welsh parentage, his father being the celebrated blind performer on the Welsh harp.

His object in revisiting Rome seems to have been to seek employment in his art, in addition to the wish of stifling the regret for the loss of an amiable wife; he accordingly commenced the copying of some of the finest pieces in that capital, but his health was soon so much impaired, that he was induced to return to England, where he did indeed arrive, but only to breathe his last sigh where he had first opened his eyes upon the world.

In Edward's Anecdotes may be seen many particulars respecting his performances; and I cannot help regretting together with that author, that his drawing, in chalk, of the gallery so munificently filled with valuable subjects for the student, and so liberally opened by a late Duke of Richmond, is lost, as such a thing would now be highly interesting to all lovers of the art.

Mr. Reynolds now attained the summit of his reputation as an artist, and maintained his dignified station to the close of his life. Cotes and Ramsay shared, in some degree, with him the fa-

shion of the day ; for each of those painters had employment from the court of England, where Reynolds as an artist was never able to become a favorite. From that source of envied and enviable honour, he had not the happiness of receiving a single commission ; for it is to be observed, that those exquisite portraits of the King and Queen, now in the council-room of the Royal Academy, were painted at the request of Reynolds himself, purposely for that place.

Mr. Cotes has now been dead upwards of forty years, having lived only two years after the establishment of the Royal Academy, of which he was a member, and indeed one of the four who signed the petition to his Majesty to solicit its foundation.

This was the artist whom Hogarth considered superior to Reynolds as a portrait painter ; but perhaps his great excellence ought to be confined solely to his portraits in crayons, in which style he was certainly superior to most of his rivals, as has been properly remarked by Mr. Edwards. In oils, however, he must be considered totally inferior to his illustrious competitor ; and he was evidently so in the opinion of the public, as his price for a three-quarter never exceeded twenty guineas.

Mr. Allan Ramsay, even if possessed of no merit of his own, would always have been noticed as

the son of Allan, the Scottish poet, and the Burns of the early part of the last century.

His father is called a self-taught poet. It is difficult, however, to know what that means when said by way of distinction—every real poet must be self-taught: and the son, in the same manner, is said to be a self-taught painter, because he had received no instructions till he gave them to himself in Italy; as every good painter has done before him, either there or elsewhere. But his being the compatriot of the Earl of Bute was a ready passport to royal notice on his return, particularly when added to his own abilities. He was certainly superior to the artists of his time in general; though his excellence did not warrant Walpole in classing him so exactly with Mr. Reynolds when he said, “Reynolds and Ramsay have wanted subjects, not genius.” But I have heard Reynolds himself say, that Ramsay was the most sensible man of all the living artists; and therefore it proved that something besides good sense is required to make a great painter.

In 1767 the royal patronage seemed favourable towards the artists, and an attempt was made to form an academy, partly arising from the dissensions and animosities which followed the incorporation in 1765; for those who were not admitted into the body as incorporated, were so stimulated by jealousy as to resolve to submit no longer to rules and regulations, towards which they

had no voice, and they accordingly attempted, for a year or two, to get up an exhibition of their own, but were not very successful in this plan.

Without entering into a tedious detail of minute circumstances and of the petty animosities at that time existing among the artists, I shall briefly observe, that during all the contentions between the Society of Artists, Dalton's Royal Academy in Pall Mall, and the intrigues and quarrels that occupied so much of the public press and of the public time, Mr. Reynolds did not interfere; his name, indeed, was on the roll of the Society at its first incorporation, and he was afterwards appointed one of the directors, but he did not act, and, as quaintly observed by a writer of that time, "did not like them much;"—in fact, he had long withdrawn himself from the private meetings of the directors, declaring publicly, that he was no friend to their proceedings.

Much credit is, however, due to him, for his exertions in favor of the public exhibitions; and Barry, indeed, does him full justice in one of his lectures, when speaking of them as *established* by Reynolds, he says, "to which we owe almost all the art we can boast."

As a painter, also, Reynolds's merit and originality were now almost universally acknowledged; and, as a further confirmation of Barry's opinion even at this time, that artist, in a letter from Rome

to Dr. Sleigh in Ireland, dated November, 1767, says—

“As to Roman artists, notwithstanding what may be said to the contrary, I have no scruple at pronouncing them not worth criticising; and I shall, with a heart-felt satisfaction, say, that Reynolds, and our people at home, possess, with a very few exceptions, all that exists of sound art in Europe.”

1768.

ÆTAT. 44.

IN this year (1768), in order at once to conciliate jarring interests, a rational and extended plan was drawn up for the present Royal Academy, of which, it has since been well observed by Barry, “under the reign of his present Majesty, our most gracious patron, the arts were, in some measure, raised out of that disgraceful obscurity in which they had been so long buried; and a Royal Academy was instituted under the King’s immediate protection, for the purpose of bringing forward that great line of historical, superior art; from the successful prosecution of which only, the King and public can expect to see its reputation worthy their attention.” The most important event to be recorded in the memoirs of this year, is the foundation of the present Royal Academy, the following account

of which is thus related by one of the principal persons concerned in its formation.

The four persons who first planned the institution, were Sir William Chambers, Mr. West, Mr. Cotes, and Mr. Moser; these together carried on the project with such profound secrecy, that not one of the incorporated society had the least knowledge or idea of its having been seriously thought of; insomuch, that even Mr. Kirby their president, had just at that time assured them, from his chair of office, that his Majesty intended to patronise them, and also to visit their exhibition. In the mean time, the four above named persons, with the concurrence of some others of their party, proceeded in their plan. They also made out a list of their officers, as well as of those who were to compose the body, containing about thirty names, and had inserted that of Reynolds amongst the rest. This list was to be delivered to the King for his approbation and signature: however, Mr. Reynolds was still unwilling to join with either party, which resolution he made known to Sir William Chambers; in consequence of which Mr. Penny was sent to persuade him to join their party, but that proved in vain. Penny then applied to Mr. West, and begged him to intercede with Reynolds, adding, that he was the only person that could influence him to consent. Mr. West accordingly called on Mr. Reynolds on the same evening, on which the whole party had a

meeting, about thirty in number, at Mr. Wilton's house, expecting the result of Mr. West's negotiation, as the king had appointed the following morning to receive their plan, with the nomination of their officers. Mr. West remained upwards of two hours endeavouring to persuade Reynolds, and at last prevailed so far, that he ordered his coach and went with Mr. West to meet the party; and immediately, on his entering the room, they, with one voice, hailed him as their president. He seemed to be very much affected by the compliment, and returned them his thanks for the high mark of their approbation, but declined the honor till such time as he had consulted with his friends Dr. Johnson and Mr. Edmund Burke. This demur greatly disappointed the company, as they were expected to be with the King on the very next morning, by appointment; but Messrs. West and Cotes avoided going to the King next day, as they could not present him with a complete list of their officers, for the want of a president; and it was not till a fortnight after that Reynolds gave his consent, although Mr. West had called on him in the mean time to know his determination, when Reynolds frankly told him, that he had been informed, from the very best authority, that their scheme would come to nothing, as it was wholly a delusion: and when Mr. West testified his astonishment at such an idea, Mr. Reynolds freely confessed to him, that he had the intelligence from

Mr. Kirby himself, who assured him that the King had declared his intention of giving his countenance and protection to the incorporated Society of Artists, and also to visit their annual exhibition, to which Mr. Kirby added, that, in consequence, he had himself declared the same to the society from the president's chair.

It was just about this time that Mr. West had finished his picture of the subject of Regulus, which was painted by the command of the King, and, on the morning appointed by his Majesty, he went with it to the palace in order to shew it to him, when the King was graciously pleased to approve of it highly: and at the time, whilst his Majesty was looking at the picture with Mr. West in the room, they were informed by a page, that Mr. Kirby was without waiting for his Majesty's commands. He was immediately sent for, and, on his entrance, the King directed his (Mr. Kirby's) attention to the picture, asking his opinion of it; Mr. Kirby commended the picture much, and particularly that part which fell under his own province, to wit, the perspective, as in that science Kirby had been the King's instructor. Kirby asked who was the painter of so good a picture, when the King pointed to Mr. West as the artist who had done it. Mr. Kirby then observed, that such a work ought most certainly to be seen by the public at large, and hoped his Majesty would permit it to be in the exhibition of the

incorporated society of Artists. The King answered, that it was his pleasure that it should be exhibited, but it most certainly should be at his own Royal Academy Exhibition. At these words poor Kirby appeared to be like one thunder-struck, and just ready to drop on the floor ; it was the first confirmation he had received of the report, which before he had considered as unfounded, and did not believe. It has been said, and supposed by many, that this circumstance so much affected his mind, that he actually died soon after, of the extreme mortification it gave him.

In the course of the year 1768, Goldsmith's comedy, called the Good-Natured Man, came out at Covent Garden theatre. In this play, the bailiff scene was thought to be vulgar by the company in the galleries, who violently testified their disapprobation at dialogue so low ; and when the speech in that scene was uttered, containing the words " That's all my eye," their delicacy was so much hurt, that it was apprehended the comedy (which in other respects was approved of) would have been driven from the stage for ever. However, by expunging the objectionable parts, that composition became a stock play, as it is called, to the theatre, and put five hundred pounds into Goldsmith's pocket.

It was in this year that the King of Denmark came to England, when every species of ingenuity was set to work in hopes of affording him amuse-

ment: the society of artists among the rest exerted their powers, and produced a splendid exhibition of their works at the great room in Spring Gardens, not only in order to gratify his Danish Majesty, but also to certify to him the degree to which the arts had risen in this country. Mr. Reynolds graced it with four of his best pictures, to wit:

A singularly fine portrait, half length, of the famous Laurence Sterne, of which there is a very good mezzotinto print;

A picture, representing James Paine, architect, and James Paine, jun.: from this picture there is also a good print taken;

A portrait of a young Lady with a Dog;

A portrait of a Lady, full length.

The exhibition was opened to the public on September 30, 1768.

Notwithstanding the part which Mr. Reynolds was taking in the necessary preparations for the establishment of a Royal Academy, yet he found time to gratify himself with a trip to Paris, in the autumn of this year, in company with Mr. William Burke, who, in a letter dated the 10th of October, from that metropolis, says, "Mr. Reynolds and I make this scamper together, and are both extremely satisfied with our tour; we return in a few days."

His return took place within the expected time; and so forward were the proposed arrangements,

that on the 28th of November a petition was presented to his Majesty, of which the professed objects were the establishment of a well regulated school or academy of design, for the use of students in the arts, and an annual exhibition open to all artists of distinguished merit, where they should have an opportunity of presenting their productions to the inspection of the public, and of thereby obtaining such share of general reputation and encouragement, as their performances might seem to merit.

It was intended to supply the funds for the support of the institution, by the produce of this annual exhibition; and his Majesty was graciously pleased to promise what further aid it might require, from the privy purse. This aid was necessary, for a few years, to the amount of 5000*l.*; but the sums raised by the exhibitions were soon so considerable, as not only to render the royal munificence unnecessary, but even to accumulate a large surplus in the funds, now forming the basis of a liberal fund for decayed artists. For the first twenty years, the net produce, on an average, amounted to upwards of 1500*l.* per annum, and since that it has amounted to an additional 1000*l.*

A very good view of the regulations of this establishment may be found in the Monthly Magazine for March, 1810; and I may here observe, that annual prizes were also determined on as sti-

mulants to rising genius. These were, of course, to be awarded to the best productions; but it was whimsically quoted at the time, from the laws of the ancient city of Thebes, that formerly the painter who exhibited the worst picture, was also subject to fine!

Professorships were likewise established, and Dr. Johnson was nominated Professor of Ancient Literature; an office, indeed, merely honorary, but conferred on him, as Sir John Hawkins hints, at the recommendation of Mr. Reynolds.

Goldsmith also was not forgotten, he having received the complimentary appointment of Professor of Ancient History; an office, like the preceding, without trouble or salary; and, as Dr. Percy observed, merely giving him a place at the annual dinner.

Goldsmith himself, in a letter to his brother, says of it—"The King has lately been pleased to make me Professor of Ancient History in a Royal Academy of Painting, which he has just established; but there is no salary annexed; and I took it rather as a compliment to the Institution, than any benefit to myself. Honours to one in my situation are something like ruffles to a man that wants a shirt."

But the most important event as relative to this Institution, and as connected with the subject of the present biography, was, that in order to give dignity to this Royal Academy of Painting, Sculp-

ture, and Architecture, which was composed of the ablest and most respectable artists then resident in Great Britain, Reynolds was elected the first President by an unanimous vote. On that occasion he was knighted, perhaps with a view to dignify him; and indeed, had that distinction been always so bestowed, it would really have been an honour, and not the subject of those sarcasms which but too often accompany the title. Reynolds received it with satisfaction, as he well knew that it would give additional splendour to his works in vulgar eyes. It is not matter of surprize that his election as president was unanimous: it is certain that, every circumstance considered, he was the most fit, if not the only person, qualified to take the chair: his professional rank, his large fortune, the circle of society in which he moved, all these contributed to establish his claim; and to these was added a still more urgent motive, namely, that he had refused (as I have been told) to belong to the Society on any other conditions. Accordingly the Royal Academy of Arts in London was opened on the 10th of December, 1768, by Sir Joshua Reynolds, Knt., with a discourse adapted to the occasion.

With respect to the title of knighthood,* which

* Sir Godfrey Kneller affected, in his drollery, to treat his titles of knight and baronet which he possessed, as beneath him; saying, that being a man of genius, he was one of God Almighty's nobles.

accompanied the election to the president's chair, I have only to add, that Edmund Burke was much gratified by the honour conferred on Sir Joshua; and he, at the time, remarked that the sound of the name was so well adapted for a title, that it seemed as if it had been chosen for the purpose.

This honour of knighthood was highly gratifying to all Sir Joshua's friends. Dr. Johnson acknowledged that for years he had not tasted wine, until he was induced to break through his rule of abstemiousness in order to celebrate his friend's elevation.

As a further testimony of Sir Joshua's merit, and well deserved honour, Barry says, in a letter, in the early part of this year, to Mr. Burke, "I am happy to find Mr. Reynolds is at the head of this academy;" (this was previous to his hearing of his knighthood;) "from his known public spirit, and warm desire of raising up art among us, (which exerted itself so successfully in establishing the Exhibition,) he will, I have no doubt contrive this institution to be productive of all the advantages that could possibly be derived from it; and whilst it is in such hands as his, we shall have nothing to fear from those shallows and quicksands upon which the Italian and French academies have lost themselves."

The task of delivering discourses in the Academy was no part of the prescribed duty of this

office first so ably filled by Sir Joshua ; but was voluntarily imposed on himself, for reasons which shall be afterwards noticed, whilst taking a slight view of his fifteenth discourse, in which he gives his reasons himself.

If it were a matter of any importance, we might regret that there is some difficulty in fixing the exact date of his first discourse : some accounts stating its delivery on the 10th of December, 1768, when the Academy was first opened : in Malone's edition of his works, it is indeed dated on the 2nd of January, 1769 ; whilst Sir Joshua himself, in a letter to Barry, which will be hereafter inserted, speaks of its being delivered on the first of that month.

Without attempting to reconcile those jarring dates, I shall merely observe, that the objects he had in view in this first discourse, were to imprint upon the minds of his audience how many advantages might be expected from such an institution ; after which he offered hints for the consideration both of the professors and of the visitors, whose office it is to attend the school of the living model. He next showed the absolute necessity of an implicit obedience to all the rules of art, on the part of the youthful students, warning them to repress any premature or irregular disposition to aim at masterly dexterity before they had well acquired the necessary rudiments ; and he then showed, to

render even diligence effectual, it was absolutely necessary that it should always be directed to proper objects.

In alluding to the extraordinary circumstance of such an institution not having been before established, he observed, that “ It is, indeed, difficult to give any other reason why an empire like that of Britain should so long have wanted an ornament so suitable to its greatness, than that slow progression of things which naturally makes elegance and refinement the last effect of opulence and power.”*

After shewing that the academy had commenced its labours at, perhaps, the happiest possible period, not only from the patronage of the Monarch, and from the general desire among the nobility to be distinguished as lovers and judges of the arts, as well as from the greater superfluity of public wealth in general to reward the professors, but also from the fact, that there was, at that time, a greater number of excellent artists than were ever known before, at one period, in the nation ; he pointed out the principal advantages resulting from the

* That such a measure as the establishment of an academy did not take place before, was accounted for, in some degree, by Sir Joshua himself; but another reason may also be assigned, to wit, the total neglect of the arts, both by the nation and its governors, and the consequent poverty of the body of artists, which rendered it impossible until his Majesty lent his assistance.

academy to the art itself, to consist not only in its furnishing able men to direct the student, but in being, also, a repository for the great examples of the art. “These,” said he, “are the materials on which genius is to work, and without which the strongest intellect may be fruitlessly or deviously employed.”

Whilst recommending strict attention to the students, he particularly inculcated, that “those models which have passed through the approbation of ages, should be considered by them as perfect and infallible guides; as subjects for their imitation, not their criticism;” and he then expressed his confidence, that this was the only efficacious way of making any progress in the arts; adding, that he who sets out with doubting, will find life finished before he becomes master even of the rudiments of his profession. He here considered it as a maxim, that he who begins by presuming on his own sense, has ended his studies as soon as he has commenced them; and from this he took occasion to observe, that every opportunity should be seized to discountenance that false and vulgar opinion, that rules are the fetters of genius. In contradiction to such an opinion, he asserted, that they were fetters only to men of no genius; as that armour which, upon the strong, is an ornament and defence, becomes a load upon the weak and mis-shapen, crippling that body which it was intended to protect.

The advantage of assiduity he proved from experience:—"When we read the lives of the most eminent painters, every page informs us, that no part of their time was spent in dissipation. Even an increase of fame served only to augment their industry. To be convinced with what persevering assiduity they pursued their studies, we need only reflect on their method of proceeding in their most celebrated works. When they conceived a subject, they first made a variety of sketches, then a finished drawing of the whole; after that a more correct drawing of every separate part—heads, hands, feet, and pieces of drapery; they then painted the picture; and, after all, retouched it from the life. The pictures, thus wrought with such pains, now appear like the effect of enchantment, and as if some mighty genius had struck them off at a blow!"

At the conclusion of this spirited discourse, he expressed his hope that the Institution might answer the expectation of its Royal Founder—"that the present age may vie in arts with that of Leo the Tenth; and that *the dignity* of the dying art (to make use of an expression of Pliny) may be revived under the reign of George the Third."

This animated oration gave general satisfaction, and in a periodical journal of that time, it was observed, that the discourse certainly did honour to the President as a painter, if any honour could be added to that which he had already acquired by his

pencil. It was also acknowledged that it had great merit as a literary composition ; whilst Sir Joshua's idea, " that the Academy would at least contribute to advance the knowledge of the arts, and bring us nearer to that ideal excellence which it is the lot of genius always to contemplate, but never to attain," is followed by the observation, that this sentiment, none but a genius conscious of the idea of unattainable perfection, and of a perpetual effort to approach it, could have conceived.

Before we proceed to investigate the purport of his discourses in their regular order, it may be well here to observe, that the delivery of these discourses was not particularly happy, considering the great taste of the speaker in other respects, and cannot be much commended ; which may be accounted for from two causes : first, that his deafness might have prevented his being well able to modulate his voice ; but secondly, I am rather of opinion, that the real cause was, that, as no man ever felt a greater horror at affectation than he did, therefore he feared to assume too much the air of an orator, lest it should have the appearance of conceit. Hence he naturally fell into the opposite extreme, as the safest retreat from what he thought the greatest evil.

But most certainly his voice was not so distinct and audible as might be desired, when the matter was so excellent ; and the following circumstance is in some degree a proof.

On one of the evenings, when Sir Joshua delivered his discourse to the Royal Academy, the audience, as usual on those occasions, was numerous ; composed not only of artists, but also of the learned and the great. The Earl of C——, who was one of the company present, came up to him, immediately after he had finished his lecture, saying, “ Sir Joshua, you read your discourse in so low a tone that I did not distinguish one word you said.” To which the president, with a smile replied, “ That was to my advantage.”

1769.

ÆTAT. 45.

ON the 1st of January, 1769^t, a poetical tribute was paid to the arts, and to the new Academy of London, by the pen of the Reverend Dr. Thomas Francklin, Chaplain to the King, and translator of Phalaris, Sophocles, and Lucian, into English, and author also of three plays, the Earl of Warwick, and Matilda, tragedies, and The Contract, a comedy.

Thus we see the native, humble, British arts, began to assume some small degree of consequence, this being the first public compliment, I believe, that was ever paid to them ; and therefore ought to be most carefully preserved as a great curiosity, as well as a good specimen of an ode : amongst modern odes, at least, not the most odious.

THE TRIUMPH OF THE ARTS.

When Discord, late, her baleful influence shed
 O'er the fair realms of Science and of Art,
 Neglected Genius bent his drooping head,
 And pierc'd with anguish ev'ry tuneful heart :

Apollo wept his broken lyre—

Wept to behold the mournful choir
 Of his lov'd Muses, now an exil'd train,
 And in their seats to see Alecto reign.

When lo! Britannia, to the throne
 Of goodness makes her sorrows known ;
 For never there did grief complain,
 Or injur'd merit plead in vain.

The monarch heard her just request,
 He saw, he felt, and he redress'd :

Quick, with a master hand, he tunes the strings,
 And harmony from discord springs.

Thus good, by Heav'n's command, from evil flows,
 From Chaos, thus, of old, Creation rose ;
 When order with confusion join'd,
 And jarring elements combin'd
 To grace, with mutual strength, the great design,
 And speak the Architect divine.

Whilst Eastern tyrants, in the trophy'd car,
 Wave the red banner of destructive war,
 In George's breast a nobler flame
 Is kindled, and a fairer fame
 Excites to cherish native worth—
 To call the latent seeds of genius forth—
 To bid discordant factions cease,
 And cultivate the gentle arts of peace.
 And lo! from this auspicious day
 The sun of science beams a purer ray.

Behold ! a brighter train of years—
A new Augustan age appears !

The time, nor distant far, shall come,
When England's tasteful youth no more
Shall wander to Italia's classic shore ;
No more to foreign climes shall roam
In search of models—better found at home.

With rapture, the prophetic muse
Her country's op'ning glories views ;
Already sees, with wond'ring eyes,
Our Titians and our Guidos rise ;—
Sees new Palladios grace th' historic page,
And *British Raffaelles* charm a future age.

Meantime, ye sons of art, your off'rings bring,
To grace your Patron and your King ;
Bid Sculpture grace his honour'd name
In marble—lasting as his fame :
Bid Painting's magic pencil trace
The features of his darling race ;
And, as it flows through all the Royal line,
Glow with superior warmth and energy divine.

If tow'ring Architecture still
Can boast her old creative skill,
Bid some majestic structure rise to view—
Worthy him, and worthy *you* ;
Where *art* may join with *nature* and with sense—
Splendor with grace—with taste, magnificence ;
Where strength may be with elegance combin'd,
The perfect image of its master's mind.

And oh ! if with the tuneful throng
The Muse may dare to mix her humble song,
In your glad train permit-her to appear,
Though poor, yet willing, and though rude, sincere,
To praise the Sov'reign whom her heart approves,
And pay this tribute to the ART she loves."

On the 2d of the month, the academy was opened, and a general meeting of the Royal Academicians took place, when some public business was gone through; after which, the whole body adjourned to an elegant entertainment at the St. Alban's Tavern, where Sir Joshua presided with his accustomed urbanity, the meeting being honoured with the presence of many of the most distinguished nobility, who were now proud to come forward as patrons of the arts.

It seems beneath the dignity even of biógraphy, to note these things, which many will esteem trifling in themselves; yet the time may come, when even these particulars will be of some interest: and as this period was an era in the annals of British art, I must be allowed to mark it by the gratulations of the poets of the day, who expressed their good wishes in the best manner they were able, and who no doubt would have done it much better if it had been in their power. In that point of view, therefore, I shall not refrain from inserting a song made for the occasion, by the good old Mr. Hull, the comedian, and sung at this joyous meeting by Mr. Vernon, the fashionable performer of the day.

SONG.

Let Science hail this happy year—
 Let Fame its rising glories sing;
 When arts unwonted lustre wear,
 And boast a patron in their King:
 And here, unrival'd shall they reign,
 For George protects the polish'd train.

To you, just ripen'd into birth,
 He gives the fair—the great design ;
 'Tis *yours*, ye Sires, of genuine worth,
 To bid the future artists shine ;
 That Arts, unrivall'd, long may reign,
 Where George protects the polish'd train.

'Tis *yours*, O well selected band !
 To watch where infant genius blows,
 To rear the flow'r, with fost'ring hand,
 And ev'ry latent sweet disclose :
 So Arts, unrivall'd, long will reign
 Where George protects the polish'd train.

No more to distant realms repair
 For foreign aid, or borrow'd rule ;
 Beneath her Monarch's gen'rous care,
 Britannia founds a nobler school—
 Where Arts, unrivall'd, shall remain,
 For George protects the polish'd train.

So shall her sons, in science bred,
 Diffuse her arts from shore to shore,
 And wide her growing genius spread,
 As round the world her thunders roar :
 For he who rules the subject main,
 Great George—protects the polish'd train."

This song, so congenial to the flattering hopes of the company, whose cares were, for a time, suspended in festivity, and who had met to be gay, was received with much applause.

On Wednesday, the 26th of April, the Exhibition of the Royal Academy, in Pall Mall, was opened for the first time, and drew the greatest crowds, and of the highest fashion ; and it was

observed, in the periodical journals of the time, that the encouragement given to this institution was even already visible in the works of genius then exhibited: and I may take the opportunity of noting in this place, that Sir Joshua's exertions to raise the character of the Academy, were not confined to his discourses alone; as, from its first opening, until the year 1790, inclusive, it appears that he sent no less than two hundred and forty-four pictures to the various exhibitions.

In this place, as a proof of the advance that the arts had made in England, even as early as 1769, I shall mention that the pictures which chiefly attracted the attention of the connoisseurs at this first season of the Royal Academy Exhibition in Pall Mall, were the departure of Regulus from Rome, and Venus lamenting the Death of Adonis, both by Mr. West; Hector and Andromache, Venus directing Æneas and Achates, by Mrs. Angelica Kauffman, a lady who was but lately arrived in London; the King and Queen, by Mr. Nathaniel Dance; Lady Molyneux, by Mr. Gainsborough; a piping Boy, a candle-light piece, by Mr. Hone; an altar-piece of the Annunciation, by Mr. Cipriani; the character of Hebe, the Duke of Gloucester, and a Boy playing at Cricket, by Mr. Cotes; a capital landscape containing a view of Penton Lynn, in Scotland, by Mr. Barrett; and the Smith, described by Shakespeare in King

John, with open mouth, swallowing a Tailor's news, by Mr. Penny : to these we must add, Sir Joshua Reynolds' portraits of the Duchess of Manchester and her Son, as Diana disarming Cupid ; the portrait of Lady Blake, as Juno receiving the cestus from Venus ; and the portrait of Miss Morris, as Hope nursing Love.

This Miss Morris, I must observe, was a beautiful young lady, who, from the unexpected misfortunes of her family, was reduced to the necessity of seeking some employment for a livelihood ; and being supposed to have requisite talents for the stage, she was advised by her friends to attempt it as a profession. Sir Joshua Reynolds, Dr. Johnson, and many other illustrious persons, who were her particular friends and patrons, attended on the first night of her appearance on any stage, when she was to perform the character of Juliet, at Covent-Garden theatre ; but from the exceeding delicacy, of both her mind and body, she was overpowered by her timidity, to such a degree, that she fainted away on her first entrance on the stage, and with much difficulty was prevailed on to go through the part. This very pitiable young lady shortly after fell into a deep decline, which ended in her death. Her mother was, I think, a native of the West Indies, and, on the death of her husband, who had been governor of one of the islands, came over to England, with a son and two daughters,

and also a negro slave, who afterwards became the servant of Sir Joshua.*

In honor of the King's birth-day, which was kept on Monday the 5th of June, and the first which had occurred after the institution of the Royal Academy, the body of Royal Academicians gave an entertainment at their house in Pall Mall; and, as a token of their grateful sense of his Majesty's favour to them, a splendid illumination in the evening was displayed, with transparent paintings, and lamps of various colours, occupying the whole front of the Royal Academy. In the centre compartment appeared a graceful female figure seated, representing Painting, surrounded with Genii, some of which guided her pencil, whilst others dictated subjects to her: at her feet were various youths employed in the study of the art; and over her head hovered a celestial form, representing Royal Munificence, attended by several other figures supporting a cornucopia filled with honors and rewards. This whole piece was executed by Mr. Cipriani, R. A.

On the left side of Painting, in another compartment, Sculpture was represented by a female figure, standing upon a rock of marble, holding

* She was the daughter of Valentine Morris, esq., the original possessor and improver of the romantic and much admired domain of Piercefield, in Monmouthshire; in the adornment of which he had expended much money, and deranged his private fortune. Miss Morris made her first appearance at Covent Garden theatre on November 29, 1768; and died May 1, 1769.

in one hand an antique bust, and in the other the chisel and mallet. This compartment was executed by Mr. West, R. A.

On the right side of Painting, in a third compartment, was represented, by another female figure, Architecture, in a contemplative attitude, holding in her hand a pair of compasses, being surrounded with buildings, and having at her feet the basket and acanthus root, which are said to have given rise to the Corinthian order. This subject was executed by Mr. Nathaniel Dance, R. A.

Immediately above the centre compartment was a tablet with this inscription, "Royal Academy of Arts, instituted MDCCLXVIII." And upon the tablet was placed a medallion, in which were represented the portraits of their Majesties, by Mr. Penny, R. A. The medallion was surrounded with festoons of laurel, roses, and myrtle intertwined, and with trophies of arms, and attributes of Venus and the Graces, painted by Mr. Richards, R. A.

Some parts of the front were adorned with trophies alluding to the different arts of design, painted by Mr. Richards and Mr. Wale, R. A. And others were enriched with stars and various figures in lamps of different colours; the top of the building was terminated with a large Imperial Crown and various pyramids, &c. in lamps of different colours.

It should be noticed, that exhibitions of transparencies were at the time quite a novelty, so much so indeed, that nothing of the kind had hitherto been seen; in addition to which, this was the joint work of the first painters in the kingdom, and therefore was viewed by the populace with astonishment and delight: since then, however, from the vast increase of artists in the nation, transparencies are become so common, that they are little thought of, and commonly very indifferently executed.

In this year Sir Joshua Reynolds wrote a most excellent letter to Barry, then a student at Rome. It is so descriptive of the writer's principles, and so honourable to his feelings as an artist, that I shall insert it here at length, only premising, that it was partly addressed to Barry in consequence of a letter from him to Mr. Burke, in which he described himself as engaged in some contests with the picture dealers at Rome, who were acting very illiberally towards young English artists, and using underhand means to prevent their being employed by various travellers in copying or making originals, as those dealers in rotten pictures earnestly desired to possess themselves of all the loose cash which affluent tourists had purposed to lay out in Vertu.

“ DEAR SIR,

“ I am very much obliged to you for your remembrance of me in your letter to Mr. Burke, which, though I have read with great pleasure as a composition, I cannot help saying with some regret, to find that so great a portion of your attention has been engaged upon temporary matters, which might be so much more profitably employed upon what would stick by you through your whole life.

“ Whoever is resolved to excel in painting, or indeed in any other art, must bring all his mind to bear upon that one object, from the moment he rises till he goes to bed; the effect of every object that meets the painter's eye may give him a lesson, provided his mind is calm, unembarrassed with other objects, and open to instruction. This general attention, with other studies connected with the art, which must employ the artist in his closet, will be found sufficient to fill up life, if it was much longer than it is. Were I in your place, I would consider myself as playing a great game, and never suffer the little malice and envy of my rivals to draw off my attention from the main object; which, if you pursue with a steady eye, it will not be in the power of all the Cicerones in the world to hurt you. Whilst they are endeavouring to prevent the gentlemen from employing the young artists, instead of injuring them, they are, in my opinion, doing them the greatest service.

“ Whilst I was at Rome I was very little employed by them, and that I always considered as so much time lost: copying those ornamental pictures, which the travelling gentlemen always bring home with them as furniture for their houses, is far from being the most profitable manner of a student spending his time. Whoever has great views, I would recommend to him, whilst at Rome, rather to live on bread and water, than lose those advantages which he can never hope to enjoy a second time, and which he will find only in the Vatican; where, I will engage, no cavalier sends his students to copy for him. I do not mean this as any reproach to the gentlemen; the works in that place, though they are the proper study of an artist, make but an awkward figure painted in oil, and reduced to the size of easel pictures. The Capella Sistina is the production of the greatest genius that was ever employed in the arts; it is worth considering by what principles that stupendous greatness of style is produced; and endeavouring to produce something of your own on those principles, will be a more advantageous method of study, than copying the St. Cecilia in the Borghese, or the Herodias of Guido, which may be copied to eternity, without contributing one jot towards making a man a more able painter.

“ If you neglect visiting the Vatican often, and particularly the Capella Sistina, you will neglect receiving that peculiar advantage which Rome can

give above all other cities in the world. In other places you will find casts from the antique, and capital pictures of the great painters, but it is *there* only that you can form an idea of the dignity of the art, as it is there only that you can see the works of Michael Angelo and Raffaele. If you should not relish them at first, which may probably be the case, as they have none of those qualities which are captivating at first sight, never cease looking till you feel something like inspiration come over you, till you think every other painter insipid, in comparison, and to be admired only for petty excellencies.

“ I suppose you have heard of the establishment of a Royal Academy here ; the first opportunity I have I will send you the discourse I delivered at its opening, which was the first of January. As I hope you will be hereafter one of our body, I wish you would, as opportunity offers, make memorandums of the regulations of the academies that you may visit in your travels, to be engrafted on our own, if they should be found useful. “ I am, with the greatest esteem,

“ Yours,

“ J. REYNOLDS.

“ On reading my letter over, I think it requires some apology for the blunt appearance of a dictatorial style, in which I have obtruded my advice. I am forced to write in a great hurry, and have little time for polishing my style.”

Barry writes thus to the Burkes, dated from Rome, July the 8th 1769.

“ I wrote an answer some time ago, to a most obliging friendly letter which I received from Sir Joshua Reynolds. I am really happy at this other mark of distinction which is bestowed upon his unquestionably superior talents. Nobody rejoices more than I do, to find the world inclined to make those acknowledgments to abilities and virtue.”

Barry, also, in his letter to Sir Joshua above-mentioned, dated from Rome, May 17th, 1769, thus expresses himself.

From Mr. Barry to Mr. Reynolds.

Rome, May 17th, 1769.

“ DEAR SIR,

“ Nothing could have made me more really happy than the very kind letter you favoured me with lately. It came most opportunely to support my spirits at a time when I was in the hands of a doctor and a surgeon, and ill of a fever, which, I believe, was occasioned by a cold I got while working in the Vatican; but, thank God, I am tolerably well got over it, and though it kept me from work some weeks, yet, as I am got back again to the Vatican, and (what with bleeding and other evacuations in my illness) with a better frame of body, there is no reason to be

dissatisfied. Whenever the Pope is made, which I hope will be soon, I shall go to the Capella Sistina.

“ There is a passage in your letter, which will be a sufficient excuse for what I am going to tell you, that I think myself rather reprehensible as a furious enthusiast for Michael Angelo, than as regarding him with any degree of coldness or indifference. I saw in *his* works only that deep knowledge of the human body, and that masterly style of drawing each part in particular, so noble in its form, and so adjusted to, and corresponding with the other parts, that for a naked figure, taken simply as such, there is nothing in painting to parallel him. It is only in the antique, where one sees the same knowledge and amazing fitness, in the detail of all the component parts of a figure ; and if this is not the summum bonum of art, it is at least very near it ; so that if, in any of my letters to my friends, I have been a little warm in expressing my feelings of the superiority of the antique to all things whatsoever, in fitness of parts, elegance and propriety of thinking, and, indeed, every thing that could be shewn in a statue ; or if I have said that Raffaello excelled in possessing the general parts of the art, and was nearest the antique in these things, and that Titian alone was the painter of painters, yet I never forgot that there were no examples of the naked to be found, except in Michael Angelo, that prodigy, in whose works may be seen the difference at least of two centuries be-

twixt them, and what was done by people immediately before him : one sees Raffaele and all his contemporaries, as studiously concealing the naked, (no one chusing to contend it with Michael Angelo in that part) as the other was of shewing it. I know but of two or three examples of naked figures in Raffaele, in the Galatea, Diogenes, and Christ in the dispute of the Sacrament, and the School of Athens, and his St. John. The two former are, you know, not to be mentioned with Michael Angelo : the St. John I will not speak of, as the original is, they say, in France : a comparison betwixt Raffaele's Jonas, and Michael Angelo's Christ, would turn much in favor of Michael Angelo, though perhaps Raffaele may have the advantage in the elegance of his idea and general form. You will excuse my mentioning these things to you, who are so much better acquainted with them already ; but I wished to exculpate myself to you, and I will further add, that it was next to impossible that I should think lightly of Michael Angelo, as it is some years since I read a paper in the Idler, which has been pointed out to me as your's. I have a notion some how or other, that the arts would be just now of some consequence, and pretty much a public concern, did not the state competitors, of whom the papers are so full, divert the attention of the public into another channel. However, I can say with truth, that as nobody is more an enthusiast for art than

I am, so there is no one who rejoices more sincerely at the honor done art, by the title and dignity his majesty has graciously conferred on that person, whose plan of a public exhibition has been as serviceable to art as his performances were. The public opinion will supply what I would say.

“I am sincerely and heartily obliged to you, for your kind advice with respect to study; it has given me great consolation to find, that my whole course of study, for near three years I have been in Italy, has been so agreeable to the plan you mention. I had the mortification here to see that I was taking quite a different route from most other people in study, as I never so much as employed myself for two hours, upon any thing besides Michael Angelo, Raffaele, and Titian, except my studies upon the antique and nature, my own little things of invention, and a piece of a figure of a Magdalen, by Annibal Carrachi. As I was conscious that my notions of colouring were bad and ill grounded, copying of Titian for some time, was, I thought, the only advisable course I could take, and I have reason to think I did not judge ill: the way of colouring I had then, was enough to damn even a good design and drawing, more especially amongst such people as ours, who are floating about after Magilphs and mysteries, and very little likely to satisfy themselves with that saying of Annibal’s ‘Buon disegno e colorito di fango.’

“ It is impossible for me to describe to you, what an advantage I had in the acquaintance of Mr. Burke; it was a preparative for, and facilitated my relish for the beautiful things of the arts here; and I will affirm from experience, that one gentleman of a literary turn, and delicate feeling for the ideal, poetical and expressive parts of the art, is likely to be of the greatest service to a young artist, and will be found the true corrective for those mechanical and practical perfections, which the general herd of painters make such a stir about in their conversations, of which this country furnishes the strongest instance in the world, as a long succession of painters here, have so corrupted one another, that there is hardly to be found one ideal beauty in any Italian painter of the day. I should have the greatest obligation to you imaginable, if you would favour me with your discourse at the opening of the Academy, which you were so obliging as to promise in your letter. I long to read it in our coffee-house; as I could wish, by way of revenge upon the enemies of art, to inspire all sorts of artists with that enthusiasm for their profession, which will give vigour to the prosecution of study, and which, (from what I have seen in the Idler) I am sure your discourses must abound with. “ I am, dear Sir,

“ With the greatest respect and love,

“ Your most obliged,

“ And very humble Servant,

“ J. B.

“ I shall be very particular and careful in making such collections of the institutions of the several academies as I can.

“ I am tempted to say, by way of apology, for that part of my attention, which, as you observe, was employed upon my disputes with some people here, that though I have found it impossible for me not to be uneasy at it, as I saw what advantages it deprived me of (not copying as you suppose) I saw also an artist for whose person and abilities I had the greatest value, helped out of the world, rather, I am afraid, before his time, and the same thing had happened here before to one Crawley a sculptor. It is impossible I say, for me not to have been moved at it, and if love of art, friendship for an ingenious man, who was doing honor to it, and regard to my own character as a man, and situation as an artist, here a burthen to my friends in England, and deprived of any occasion that might offer for lightening that burden; if these things could not move me, I do not know what would; but as you so kindly interest yourself in my welfare, I will assure you with great truth, that I have taken care that those anxieties should never interfere with my plan of study, which I saw clearly enough, was the only pillar upon which must be founded all my hopes.

“ You will oblige me in shewing this letter to Mr. Burke and family, as I shall not write for a

few posts to come, and yet would be glad they knew I was alive and well.

“ For Heaven’s sake contrive it so as to get casts and moulds made for the academy of the four basso-relievos in the garden of the Villa Medici; the Christ of Michael Angelo, the arms of his Moses, and a good many antiques, of which there are moulds made.”

I have inserted this long letter, because I think it contains many good and useful hints in respect to the mode of study, which young Artists should pursue.

In the month of October, this year, Sir Joshua was called on to attend the sessions in the Old Bailey, in company with Dr. Johnson, Garrick, Dr. Goldsmith, and several other distinguished characters, to give evidence to character in favor of the well known Mr. Baretti, in consequence of his being obliged to stand trial under a verdict of manslaughter, found against him by a coroner’s inquest, on the 10th of the month.

This unfortunate circumstance arose from Mr. Baretti having been attacked on the 5th in the evening, at the end of Panton-street, going into the Haymarket, by a prostitute, who rudely and indecently accosted him. He pushed her from him, but she, finding by his accent that he was a foreigner, immediately called him by the most opprobrious names; and her loud tones having

brought up a bully, he began to assault Mr. Baretto in the most outrageous manner.

Some more of the gang then approached, and attempted to hustle him; when he was obliged, in his defence, to pull out a small knife, warning them not to use him ill, that he would not bear it, and would strike the first person that should come near him.

He then ran, and as they pursued him, he kept moving his hand backward and forward in running from them, to defend himself, and thus wounded two of his assailants, one of whom died afterwards in the Middlesex hospital. The crowd was now so great, that Mr. Baretto, no longer in dread of his life, immediately submitted himself, and was committed by Sir John Fielding to Tothill-fields prison.

The coroner's inquest sat two days before they brought in their verdict, when Baretto was admitted to bail, and the trial taking place on the 23rd, he refused to avail himself of the usual privilege of having half his jury composed of foreigners; but the evidences for the prosecution so completely contradicted themselves and each other, that little more was necessary than for him to explain the circumstances, which he did, justifying the act as one of self-defence, after having been repeatedly struck and abused; at the same time asserting, that the knife was drawn only to terrify, and not

to wound, though the pressing of the populace in his retreat had, in a moment of agitation, led him further than he at first intended.

This was confirmed by some most respectable eye-witnesses; and the host of brilliant evidence, in favour of his general character, immediately drew forth a verdict of acquittal, to the complete satisfaction of the court and of the public at large.

The only pupil whom Sir Joshua had at this period was Mr. Charles Gill, son of a person at Bath, whose exquisite taste as a pastry cook has been particularly noticed by Anstey in his celebrated poem. Mr. Gill, the younger, has, however, not been so celebrated in his art, and is unhappily one of those whom Mr. Edwards notices to have been peculiarly unfortunate, having received a very severe wound in his thigh, which has deprived him of the use of his leg.*

* Whilst speaking of Sir Joshua's pupils, I shall take the liberty to introduce an anecdote of Mr. Gill's father, as it was related to me by the son Charles.

Mr. Gill, senior, the noted pastry-cook of Bath, was a stout well-made athletic man, that might intimidate, even by his appearance only; and as he was travelling once in a post-chaise alone, on the road between London and Bath, it was his chance to espy a highwayman making his way up to the chaise with an intention to rob him. At this, Mr. Gill's heart failed him; and in order to get the fearful business over as quick as possible, he took out his purse in readiness to deliver it to the highwayman, even before it was demanded; and when the robber approached near to the chaise-window, Gill not being very deliberate in what

To return to our subject, Sir Joshua during part of this year appears to have been deprived of his sister's domestic attentions, by a visit to Paris. This has been noticed by Dr. Johnson, in a letter to a Miss Flint, a very young lady who had translated his *Strictures on Shakspeare* into French, and was then resident at that gay metropolis. He says, "How can you prevent me from complaining of those charms by which you have gained so much on Miss Reynolds, that she no longer remembers her country nor her friends? It is but a trifle for you to praise us; it is a trifle to spread our literary fame, whilst you deprive us of the pleasure of seeing and of conversing with Miss Reynolds. In short, Madam, *you* must become less amiable, if you wish that we should love you more."

Miss Reynolds had accompanied Miss Flint to Paris. This Miss Flint afterwards became Ma-

he did, and eager to show his willingness to comply with any demand that should be made, thrust his head through the window, not perceiving, in his hurry, that the glass was up, and broke it into shivers. This violent act alarmed the highwayman, who concluded it must be the result of invincible intrepidity, and accordingly he turned about his horse, and immediately rode off, thinking it best not to have any thing to do with such a lion-hearted fellow: but Gill, still apprehending danger, thought the robber would take him by surprize, by firing his pistol at him through the back of the carriage; and therefore, to be the more secure, he instantly laid himself down at the bottom of the chaise, and thus continued his journey.

dame de Reverall, having married one of the noblesse of France, and being left a widow, the unfortunate lady, together with her only son, was guillotined by those wretches who possessed the power in the reign of terror.

At the time Miss Reynolds was in Paris, (as she informed me,) she attended a sale of pictures. It was a most capital collection, yet the sale was so private, that the catalogue was not printed, but handed about the room on a written paper. The collection contained many very fine portraits by Titian and Vandyke, besides various other subjects by the most eminent masters, particularly one by Rembrandt, historical, with figures the full size of life. On her describing the picture afterwards to Sir Joshua, he said it must, by her account of it, have been worth three thousand pounds at least. All of those she saw sold for next to nothing, for there were but few bidders in the room; and being without money herself to make purchases, she viewed with inward torture those precious articles knocked down for the most trifling sums. Indeed, the regret she felt at not being able to possess herself of such bargains had so great an effect on her, that she feared she should have fainted away in the auction-room. Some few she did buy, and at a very small price, which were very fine; these she sent to England, to her brother Sir Joshua, who, unluckily, not having a sufficient reliance on her

judgement in pictures, had not previously commissioned her to make any purchases for him.

Miss Frances Reynolds had long lived in the house of Sir Joshua, her brother, which she superintended in its domestic economy ; but conceived, on some occasion, that she had not been so kindly treated as she deserved. This occasioned a small degree of coolness between them, and it was her intention to compose a letter, in order to explain to him her supposed grievances ; yet the composition of this letter was an affair of great difficulty : she, therefore, consulted with her sage friend Dr. Johnson, who participated with her in her troubles, and voluntarily offered to write a letter himself, which when copied should pass as her own. This accordingly he performed ; but when this letter* was produced by him for her approval, she felt herself obliged to reject it, as the whole contents of it were so very unlike her own diction, and so decidedly like his, that the intended deception would no more have passed with Sir Joshua, than if Johnson had attired himself in her cap and gown, and endeavoured to impose his identical person upon Sir Joshua as his sister.

It was also some time about this period, and previous to my becoming a pupil of Sir Joshua,

* It began thus—

“ I am well aware that complaints are always odious, but complain I must.

that a circumstance took place, highly illustrative of his character, and which I shall now detail, knowing it to be authentic.

Sir Joshua, as his usual custom, looked over the daily morning paper at his breakfast time ; and on one of those perusals, whilst reading an account of the Old Bailey sessions, to his great astonishment, saw that a prisoner had been tried and condemned to death for a robbery committed on the person of one of his own servants, a negro who had been with him for some time. He immediately rung the bell for the servants, in order to make his inquiries, and was soon convinced of the truth of the matter related in the newspaper. This black man had lived in his service as footman for several years, and has been pourtrayed in several pictures, particularly in one of the Marquis of Granby, where he holds the horse of that General. Sir Joshua reprimanded this black servant for his conduct, and especially for not having informed him of this serious adventure ; when the man said he had concealed it only to avoid the blame he should have incurred had he told it : he then related the following circumstances of the business, saying, that Mrs. Anna Williams (the old blind lady who lived at the house of Dr. Johnson) had, some time previous, dined at Sir Joshua's with Miss Reynolds ; that in the evening she went home to Bolt-court, Fleet-street, in a hackney-coach, and that he had been sent to attend her to her house.

On his return he had met with companions who had detained him till so late an hour, that when he came to Sir Joshua's house, he found the doors were shut and all the servants gone to rest. In this dilemma he wandered in the street till he came to a watch-house, in which he took shelter for the remainder of the night, among the variety of miserable companions to be found in such places; and amidst this assembly of the wretched, the black man fell sound asleep, when a poor thief, who had been taken into custody by the constable of the night, perceiving, as the man slept, that he had a watch and money in his pocket (which was seen on his thigh), he seized an opportunity and stole the watch, and with a pen-knife cut through the pocket, and so possessed himself of the money. When the Black awaked from his nap, he soon discovered what had been done to his cost, and immediately gave the alarm, and a strict search was made through the company; when the various articles which the Black had lost were found in the possession of the unfortunate wretch who had stolen them. He was accordingly secured, and next morning carried before the Justice, and committed to take his trial at the Old Bailey, (the Black being bound over to prosecute), and, as we have seen, was at his trial cast and condemned to death. Sir Joshua, much affected by this recital, immediately sent his principal servant, Ralph Kirkly, to make all inquires

into the state of the criminal, and, if necessary, to relieve his wants in whatever way could be done. When Kirkly came to the prison, he was soon admitted to the cell of the prisoner, where he beheld the most wretched spectacle that imagination can conceive—a poor forlorn criminal, without a friend on earth who could relieve or assist him, and reduced almost to a skeleton by famine and by filth, waiting till the dreadful morning should arrive when he was to be rendered a terrible example by a violent death. Sir Joshua now ordered fresh cloathing to be sent to him, and also that the black servant as a penance, as well as an act of charity should carry to him every day a sufficient supply of food from his own table; and at that time Mr. E. Burke being very luckily in office he applied to him, and by their joint interest they got his sentence changed to transportation; when, after being furnished with all necessaries, he was sent out of the kingdom.

When Goldsmith first published his “Deserted Village,” he dedicated it to his friend, Sir Joshua, in which he elegantly observes, “I can have no expectations, in an address of this kind, either to add to your reputation or to establish my own. You can gain nothing from my admiration, as I am ignorant of the art in which you are said to excel; and I may lose much by the severity of your judgement, as few have a juster taste in poetry than you. Setting interest, therefore, aside, to which I never

paid much attention, I must be indulged, at present, in following my affections. The only dedication I ever made was to my brother, because I loved him better than most other men. He is since dead. Permit me to inscribe this poem to you."

During the latter part of the year, Sir Joshua was much occupied in the preparation of his second discourse, which was delivered at the rooms of the Academy, on the 11th of December, 1769.

The general object of this lecture was to convey a brief code of instructions for improvement in the various arts which the Academy was intended to encourage; and these hints, as it was very justly observed at the time, were offered with the "ingenuous modesty of a man, who by excellence becomes conscious of defect, as hints founded upon his own previous mistakes, which might at least prevent industry from being misapplied."

Considering the study of painting in particular, as divided into three parts, he supposed the first, which was merely that of acquiring a facility of drawing any object, a tolerable readiness in the management of colours, and an acquaintance with the most simple and obvious of the rules of composition, to have been already passed through by the student; to whom he next recommended the absolute necessity of collecting subjects for expression, and of amassing a stock of ideas capable of being combined and varied agreeable to circumstances.

This he considered as forming the second period, in which the student was to endeavour to acquire a general knowledge of all that was already known and executed; in which, no longer under the tuition of any particular master, he was to regard himself solely as the pupil of the art, and thus to acquire and combine all the perfections scattered through the works of the most celebrated of past times, and of the various schools.

In this part of the progress, though the student was to be at liberty to regulate his taste, and to enlarge the powers of his imagination, still was he to consider himself as restricted by certain rules, and so much in subjection and discipline under the art in general, as not to be permitted to resign himself to any particular authority, much less to deviate into any track where he could perceive no antecedent footsteps.

Having gone through the second, and arrived at the last stage, he considered the student as then liberated from all former authority, and to be now guided solely by judgement: being thus placed, if not upon an equality, yet in the same rank with those who had preceded him; and even as exercising a portion of sovereignty over those very rules by which he himself had been governed in the former course of his studies.

At this period, too, he described him as justified in adopting a new mode of judgement; being no longer bound to compare the productions of

rat with each other, but to examine the art itself by Nature's own standard, and thus to correct its errors, and supply its defects.

With a memory thus stored, and a judgement thus directed, then, but not till then, was the student to try the power of imagination, nay, even to give it the reins; for he asserted, that "the man whose mind has been thus disciplined, might be indulged in the warmest enthusiasm, and might even venture to play on the borders of the wildest extravagance; as then the habitual dignity, which long converse with the greatest minds has imparted to him, will display itself in all his attempts, and he will stand among his instructors, not as an imitator, but as a rival." He assumed, that invention was little more than a new combination of such images as have been already treasured up in the memory, so that he whose mind was best stored with images would most certainly be the most capable of invention; and thus, that he who was best acquainted with the compositions of others, would be the most capable of originality.

Of course it followed, as he premised, that such artists as toil on in the dull drudgery of copying, though they might, indeed, faithfully exhibit the minutest part of some favourite composition, would, however, never arrive at any excellence. This position, so much at variance with the rules then generally adopted, he explained by the ob-

servation, that, of the best large compositions, a great part was always common-place, which, though it takes much time to copy, could conduce but little to improvement. It follows, of course, as he observes, that imitation should always be preceded by selection; but still, as that requires no effort of the mind, so would the powers of invention and composition become torpid and devoid of energy from want of exercise, instead of being kept, as they ought to be, in constant practice.

Indeed, he confined the use of copying solely to the learning to colour; though even that branch of the art can never be acquired by a servile copyist. And here too, he pointed out, that a skilful artist would always rather consider what the productions of the ancient masters had been, than what they are now, when changed by dirt and varnish; and from hence he again pointed out the necessity to copy Nature herself, in comparison with whose hues, the best coloured pictures are but faint and feeble and therefore most likely to give the youthful student ideas totally distinct from either art or nature.

In addition to these hints, he allowed that copying might be so far proper, as to make slight sketches of the machinery and general management of any admired picture, in order to preserve these for future regulations of style, so that the student, instead of copying the touches of the great masters, would only copy their conceptions.

Yet, in these general observations, it was not his intention to do away models in painting: but instead of advising the student to paint a copy, he recommended to him to paint a companion; so that, by comparing the two carefully together, he might best see his own defects, and be thereby taught to guard against them.

In this most important part of the art, he recommended Ludovico Caracchi as the best model for style, and this he accompanied by some most judicious remarks, but too long for insertion here: and his concluding observations are highly worthy the attention of all students, showing them that to excel, they must always consider that “Excellence is never granted to man but as the reward of Labour.”

1770.

ÆTAT. 46.

ABOUT the year 1770, Dr. Goldsmith lost his mother, who died in Ireland. On this occasion, he immediately dressed himself in a suit of cloathes of grey cloth, trimmed with black, such as is commonly worn for second mourning. When he appeared the first time after this at Sir Joshua Reynolds's house, Miss F. Reynolds, the sister of Sir Joshua, asked him whom he had lost, as she saw he wore mourning, when he answered, a distant relation only; being shy, as I conjecture, to own that he

wore such slight mourning for so near a relative. This appears in him an unaccountable blunder in wearing such a dress: as all those who did not know his mother, or of her death, would not expect or require him to wear mourning at all, and to all those who knew of his mother's death it would appear to be not the proper dress of mourning for so near a relative; so that he satisfied nobody and displeased some: for Miss Reynolds, who afterwards heard of his mother's decease, thought it unfeeling in him to call her a distant relation.

In the year 1770, died a former pupil of Sir Joshua's of the name of Dusign. His father was a colonel in the army, and his mother daughter of the Earl of Hyndford, a Scottish peer. After quitting Sir Joshua, he practised for a few years, at Bath, where his family resided; but the desire of improving himself in his art induced him to proceed to Rome, and there he soon after died of a consumption. About this time, also, a little circumstance took place, which, from its connection with the art, deserves a record here.

Most persons remember the lines by Pope which begin thus:

“Come, gentle air! th' Æolian shepherd said,
While Procris panted in the secret shade.”——

These verses, it is well known, Pope sent to Miss Martha Blount, accompanied with a fan, on

which was represented the story of Cephalus and Procris, designed and painted by himself, with the motto "*Aura Veni.*"

After the death of Miss Blount, this fan, with other effects, was sold by public auction, and Sir Joshua Reynolds sent a person to bid for it, as far as thirty guineas; but the man who was intrusted with the commission mistook the mark in the catalogue, and thought it could mean no more than thirty shillings, as that sum seemed a very sufficient price for a fan. As it sold, however, for about two pounds, he lost the purchase; but, luckily, it was bought by a dealer in toys, and Sir Joshua got it by giving him a reasonable profit on his bargain. The fan was afterwards stolen from him.

Sir Joshua's opinion of the degree of skill with which it was painted, being asked; he replied, that it was such as might have been expected from one who painted for his amusement alone;—like the performance of a child. "This must always be the case when the work is taken up only from idleness, and laid aside when it ceases to amuse any longer. But those," he added, "who are determined to excel, must go to their work whether willing or unwilling, morning, noon, and night, and will find it to be no play, but, on the contrary, very hard labour."

This was said to his pupils; and in this mode only it was that he ever gave any instruction to

them, when accident produced an opportunity to give it force.

Sir Joshua's close attention to his profession required a certain portion of relaxation and social intercourse with his friends; and about the year 1770, he, as stated by Mr. Cumberland, was one of a very pleasant society, which, without having the name of a club, was accustomed to dine together, on stated days, at the British Coffee House.

This society was composed of men of the first eminence for their talents; and as there was no exclusion, in the system, of any member's friend or friends, their parties were continually enlivened by the introduction of new guests, who, of course, furnished new sources for conversation, from which politics and party seemed, by general consent, decidedly proscribed.

Such a society might, no doubt, have been highly agreeable; but its description, thus strongly marked by Mr. Cumberland, seems rather drawn up in contradistinction to the Literary Club, of which he was not a member.

This society at the British Coffee House must, however, with the exception of Johnson's conversation, have made him amends for any exclusion from the other; for here were Foote, Fitzherbert, Garrick, Macpherson, Doctors Carlisle, Robinson, and Beattie, Caleb Whiteford, and "though last, not least," Sir Joshua Reynolds, who introduced Goldsmith as a member, immediately previous to

the representation of his comedy of "She Stoops to Conquer."

It was about this time, too, that the so often told circumstance of the *Epitaphs* took place. The occurrences which led to this display of witicism, have been variously detailed. I shall, therefore, insert Mr. Cumberland's account of it, as it contains some particulars not otherwise generally known.

He says, that it was on a proposal started by Edmund Burke, that a party of friends who had dined together at Sir Joshua's, and at his house, should meet at the St. James's Coffee House, which accordingly took place, and was occasionally repeated with much festivity and good fellowship. Dr. Barnard, Dean of Derry, Dr. Douglas, afterwards Bishop of Salisbury, Johnson, Garrick, Sir Joshua, Goldsmith, Edmund and Richard Burke, Hickey, an attorney, an Irishman, and a friend of the Burkes, commemorated by Goldsmith, and two or three others, constituted the party.

It was at one of these meetings that the idea was suggested of extempore epitaphs upon the parties present; pens and ink were called for, and Garrick, off hand, with a good deal of humour, wrote the epitaph upon poor Goldsmith, who was the first *in jest*, as he proved *in reality*, that was committed to the grave.

The Dean also gave him an epitaph, and Sir Joshua illuminated the Dean's verses with a sketch

of his bust in pen and ink, which Mr. C. states to have been inimitably caricatured ; but this does not appear to me like an act of Sir Joshua's, nor did I ever hear it mentioned by any other author.

These circumstances were of course sufficient to prompt Goldsmith to his well known poem of "Retaliation," which, however, was written with such good temper, as to shew that he was fully convinced of the pleasantries of his friends having been solely produced by the harmless mirth of the moment. It was an observation or pun of Edmund Burke's on this occasion, "That an Epitaph is a grave Epigram."

It is probable that whoever reads this Memoir, must have already seen that celebrated poem ; yet still his delineation of Sir Joshua is too accurate to be here omitted.

"Here Reynolds is laid ; and to tell you my mind,
 He has not left a better or wiser behind ;
 His pencil was striking, resistless, and grand,
 His manners were gentle, complying, and bland ;
 Still born to improve us in every part,
 His pencil our faces, his manners our heart :
 To coxcombs averse, yet most civilly steering,
 When they judged without skill, he was still hard of hearing ;
 When they talked of their Raffaelles, Corregios, and stuff,
 He shifted his trumpet,* and only took snuff !"

In the poetical epistle addressed to Goldsmith, by Cumberland, as a supplement to his Poem, are the following lines :

* His ear trumpet which he used being deaf.

“ Pour forth to Reynolds without stint,
 Rich Burgundy, of Ruby tint ;
 If e'er his colours chance to fade,
 This brilliant hue shall come in aid ;
 With ruddy lights refresh the faces,
 And warm the bosoms of the Graces.”

These lines certainly savour much of their author.

When first the cross readings, ship news, and mistakes of the press, appeared in the newspapers of the day, they attracted universal attention, and the lucky invention so much delighted Dr. Goldsmith, that he declared, in the heat of his admiration of them, it would have given him more pleasure to have been the author of them, than of all the works he had ever published of his own : and he particularly admired the happy thought in the signature, which was *Papyrius Cursor*.

They were sketched by the late Caleb Whiteford, who was one of the members when the epitaphs were written. On that occasion, Whiteford wrote two on Goldsmith and Cumberland, with which they were both so displeased, that he did not attend at the next meeting, but addressed the following apology to Sir Joshua.

“ Admire not, dear Knight !
 That I keep out of sight,
 Consider what perils await him,
 Who with ill season'd jokes
 Indiscreetly provokes
 The *Genus irritabile Vatum*.

I felt when these swains
 Rehears'd their sweet strains,
 That mine had too much lemon juice ;
 And strove to conceal,
 For the general weal,
 What at last I was forc'd to produce.

After such panegyric
 The least thing satiric
 Must throw both the Bards in the twitters ;
 'Twas impossible they,
 After drinking Tokay,
 Could relish a bumper of *bitters*.

Do talk to each bard,
 Beg they won't be too hard,
 But be merciful as they are stout ;
 I rely on your skill,
 Say just what you will,
 And as YOU brought me in bring me out !

To the company too,
 Some apology's due,
 I know you can do it with ease ;
 Be it your's, Sir, to place,
 In the *best light*, my case,
 And give it what *colour* you please.

For those brats of my brain,
 Which have caus'd so much pain,
 Henceforth I renounce and disown 'em ;
 And still keep in sight,
 When I epitaphs write,
 De mortuis nil nisi bonum.'

With this whimsical request it is said Sir Joshua complied, and by his friendly exertions succeeded in restoring that harmony which had thus been

interrupted by the irritability of those who were annoyed by Caleb's briskness.

It is scarcely necessary to enter into the particulars of the well known anecdote of Dr. Barnard, already mentioned as a member of this society; when having advanced in conversation with Sir Joshua and Dr. Johnson, that he thought no man could improve who was past the age of forty-five, the latter immediately turned round to the Dean and observed, "that he (the Dean) was an instance to the contrary; for there was great room for improvement in him, and he wished that he would set about it."

This blunt speech shocked the Dean so much, that for some little time he could not make an answer; but recollecting himself, he replied, "that he agreed that sometimes they did alter by growing more blunt and brutish."

The next day he sent a very elegant poetic epistle, addressed to "Sir Joshua Reynolds and Co." and as part of those stanzas is highly descriptive of Sir Joshua, I shall not only insert that passage, but the whole in order to make it more intelligible and impressive.

"I lately thought no man alive,
Could e'er improve past forty-five,
And ventur'd to assert it;
The observation was not new,
But seemed to me so just and true,
That none could controvert it.

No, Sir! says Johnson, 'tis not so,
That's your mistake, and I can shew,
 An instance if you doubt it ;
You, Sir! who are near forty-eight,
May much improve, 'tis not too late ;
 I wish you'd set about it.

Encourag'd thus to mend my faults,
I turn'd his counsel in my thoughts,
 Which way I should apply it ;
Learning and wit seem'd past my reach,
For who can learn, when none will teach,
 And wit—I could not buy it.

Then come, my friends, and try your skill,
You can inform me if you will,
 (My books are at a distance ;)
With you I'll live and learn, and then,
Instead of books, I shall read men,
 So lend me your assistance.

Dear Knight of Plympton, tell me how
To suffer with unruffled brow,
 And smile serene like thine ;
The jest uncouth, or truth severe,
To such I'll turn my deafest ear,
 And calmly drink my wine.

Thou say'st not only skill is gain'd,
But genius too may be attain'd,
 By studious imitation ;
Thy temper mild, thy genius fine,
I'll copy till I make them mine
 By constant application.

Thy art of pleasing teach me, Garrick !
Thou who reversest odes Pindarick,*
 A second time read o'er ;

* Garrick had said that Cumberland's Odes might be read either backwards or forwards, with equal beauty and precision.

Oh could we read thee backwards too,
Last thirty years thou shouldst review,
And charm us thirty more.

If I have thoughts, and can't express them,
Gibbon shall teach me how to dress them,
In terms select and terse ;
Jones teach me modesty and Greek,
Smith how to think, Burke how to speak,
And Beauclerk to converse.

Let Johnson teach me how to place,
In fairest light, each borrow'd grace,
From him I'll learn to write ;
Copy his clear, familiar style,
And from the roughness of his file
Grow like himself—polite."

In the midst of all this excellent society, Sir Joshua still attended sedulously to his profession ; and in the year (1770,) his price for a head was raised to thirty-five guineas : his own portrait was also painted about this time by Zoffanii, in a large picture, in which were represented all the first members of the Royal Academy, and now in the King's collection. This group of portraits was afterwards engraved by Earlom.

On the 14th of December he produced his third discourse, whose leading objects were a delineation of the great and essential principles of the grand style, an investigation of beauty, and a series of arguments to prove that the genuine habits of nature are totally distinct from those of fashion.

He commenced this discourse by adverting to a great difficulty which operated against him in the arrangement of each discourse; that was the circumstance of his being obliged to direct his advice to an assembly composed of so many students, of different ages, and of different degrees of advancement. In speaking afterwards of the close attention to be paid to nature, he still warned the student that even nature herself is not to be too closely copied; and he added, that there are excellencies in the art of painting beyond what is commonly called the imitation of nature; so that a mere copier of nature can never produce any thing great, can never raise and enlarge the conceptions, nor warm the heart of the spectator.

He therefore recommended to the genuine painter to have more extensive objects in view, and instead of endeavouring to amuse mankind with the minute neatness of his imitations, rather to endeavour to improve them by the grandeur of his ideas; and thus to strive for fame by captivating the imagination, instead of seeking praise by the silly attempt at deceiving the senses. The correctness of this principle he considered as so absolute in itself, as not to require the aid of novelty to recommend it, and he shewed that it was from the earliest times enforced by the poets, orators, and rhetoricians of antiquity, as well as supported by the general opinion of the enlightened part of

mankind; giving, at the same time, appropriate quotations from the classic authorities.

To this he added, "that the moderns are not less convinced than the ancients of this superior power (of the ideal beauty), existing in the art; nor less sensible of its effects. Every language has adopted terms expressive of this excellence. The *gusto grande* of the Italians, the *beau ideal* of the French, and the *great style*, *genius*, and *taste*, among the English, are but different appellations of the same thing. It is this intellectual dignity, they say, that ennobles the painter's art; that lays the line between him and the mere mechanic; and produces those great effects in an instant, which eloquence and poetry, by slow and repeated efforts, are scarcely able to attain."

He confessed, indeed, that it is not easy to define in what this *great style* consists; nor to describe, by words, the proper means of acquiring it, even if the mind of the student should be highly capable of such an acquisition; for if taste or genius were to be taught by rules, then they would no longer be taste or genius. Still, although there neither are, nor can be, any precise invariable rules for the exercise of the acquisition of these great qualities, yet, as he expressed himself, they always operate in proportion to our attention in observing the works of nature, to our skill in selecting, and to our care in digesting, methodizing, and comparing our observations.

He therefore recommended a long and strict examination both of the beauties and defects of nature, by which means the student is enabled to acquire a just idea of her beautiful forms, and to correct nature by herself, her imperfect state by her more perfect.

The eye being thus enabled to distinguish the beauties and deficiencies, as well as the deformities, the judgement is then enabled, as he observed, to make out an abstract idea of the general forms of things, more perfect than any one original, “and, what may seem a paradox, the student learns to design naturally by drawing his figures unlike to any one object.”

This then, he described to be “Ideal Beauty,” the idea of the perfect state of nature, that great leading principle by which works of genius are conducted; an idea which has acquired and which seems to have a right to the epithet of divine, “as it may be said to preside like a supreme judge over all the productions of nature, appearing to be possessed of the will and intention of the Creator, as far as they regard the external form of living beings.” He added, that when a man once possesses this idea in its perfection, there is no danger but that he will be sufficiently warmed by it himself, and also be enabled to warm and ravish every one else.

With respect to *fashion*, he laid it down as a principle, that however the mechanick and orna-

mental arts may be obliged, or even permitted, to sacrifice to her, yet she must be entirely excluded from any control over the art of painting: wherefore the painter must never mistake this capricious changeling for the genuine offspring of nature, but must divest himself of all prejudices in favour of his age and country; and must even disregard all local and temporary ornaments, looking only on those general habits which are every where and always the same, addressing his works to the people of every age and every country, and even calling upon posterity to be his spectators.

Here he took occasion to reprobate the ridiculous frippery of the style of French painting in the time of Louis XIV. but acknowledged, that to avoid the errors of that school, and to retain the true simplicity of nature, is still a task more difficult than may appear at first sight; as the prejudices in favour of the fashions and customs to which we have been used, and which are justly called a second nature, make it often difficult to distinguish that which is natural from that which is the result of education. (Our only guides and instructors, then, he asserted, are to be found among the ancients; by a careful study of whose works, the artist and the man of taste will be enabled to form a just conception of the real simplicity of nature; to which he added, "they will suggest many observations which would probably escape you, if your study were confined to nature

alone, and indeed, I cannot help suspecting, that in this instance the ancients had an easier task than the moderns. They had, probably, little or nothing to unlearn, as their manners were nearly approaching to this desirable simplicity; while the modern artist, before he can see the truth of things, is obliged to remove a veil, with which the fashion of the times has thought proper to cover her.”

After some very judicious observations on the imitators of nature in her lowest forms, and justly reprobating them in some instances, he concluded his admirable discourse, by warning his hearers not to consider him as countenancing a careless or undetermined manner of painting; adding, that although the painter is certainly to overlook the accidental discriminations of nature, yet he is still to exhibit distinctly and with precision, the general forms of things; wherefore a firm and determined outline is one of the characteristics of the great style in painting: to which he subjoined the important truism, that he who possesses the knowledge of the exact form which every part of nature ought to have, will be fond of expressing that knowledge with correctness and precision in all his works.

Before we close this year, I may mention a pupil who was a short time with Sir Joshua, and introduced to him about this period, at the earnest solicitation of Dr. Goldsmith. His name was

Thomas Clark, born in Ireland, and educated at the Academy of Dublin. He drew very well, particularly the head, but had very little notion of colouring ; and, not having had much practice in painting, could be of very little assistance to Sir Joshua : therefore, they soon parted. He died young, but when or where I know not.

1771.

ÆTAT. 47.

IT was in the year 1771, that I was first placed under the tuition of Sir Joshua Reynolds, to whom I was introduced, and strongly recommended by my good and much respected friend Dr. John Mudge. If I might now be suffered to say a little of myself, I would declare, that I feel it next to impossible to express the pleasure I received in breathing, if it may be so said, in an atmosphere of art ; having until this period been entirely debarred, not only from the practice of the art itself, but even from the sight of pictures of any excellence, as the county of Devon at that time did not abound with specimens, and even those few which are scattered about that country I had no opportunity of ever seeing ; and as, from the earliest period of my being able to make any observation, I had conceived Reynolds to be the greatest painter that ever lived, it may be conjectured what I felt when I found myself in his

house as his scholar; but as the admiration and respect which I now honestly confess I always felt for him, render me liable to be considered a partial judge of his various merits, this consideration inclines me to give the authorities of others, in preference to my own, whenever it will serve my purpose—of such as knew him well, and may be considered as less prejudiced encomiasts.

As one prominent cause of Sir Joshua's cultivating the very best society, and which almost may be said to have been domesticated with him, Mr. Malone is correct in stating, that finding how little time he could spare from his profession, for the purpose of acquiring, and adding to his knowledge from books, he very early and wisely resolved to partake, as much as possible, of the society of all the ingenious and learned men of his own time; in consequence of which, and his unassuming and gentle manner, and refined habits, his table, for above thirty years, exhibited an assemblage of all the talents of Great Britain and Ireland: there being, during that period, scarce a person in the three kingdoms distinguished for his attainments in literature or the arts, or for his exertions at the bar, in the senate, or the field, who was not occasionally found there.

In addition to this, it has been stated by the author of "Testimonies to his genius," that the circle of his acquaintance, owing to the celebrity of his name, was very extended; that many illustri-

ous foreigners were on a footing of personal intimacy with him ; and that he was resorted to by persons of the highest quality, who revered his genius as much as they respected the excellence of his private character. Thence, his house was long the resort of excellence of every kind, of the learned, the elegant, the polite, in short of all that were eminent for worth, or distinguished by genius. “ From such connections, his mind, rich in its own store, received an accession of most extensive knowledge, and an inexhaustible treasure for conversation. He was rich in observation, anecdote, and intelligence.”

To such testimonies as those my own suffrage is unnecessary : I shall therefore only observe, that, among the many advantages which were to be gained in the house of Sir Joshua Reynolds, one of the most considerable certainly was, the opportunity of improvement from the familiar intercourse which he thus perpetually kept up with the most eminent men of his time for genius and learning.

A few anecdotes of some of those persons I have collected, and have inserted many which are new and not to be found in any other writer ; for, of the illustrious dead, even the slightest memorials are ever received with a degree of reverence ; and though but trifles in themselves, yet as they relate to distinguished characters, we consider them as a kind of relics, and attend to each little

circumstance with the same religious enthusiasm as the devotee follows the footsteps of his saint. They help to transport the mind back to the very period in which the occurrences were passing, and for a time we seem to be existing in a former age. Therefore, without further apology, I shall give those which at this time occur to my recollection.

Dr. Johnson being in company with Sir Joshua and his sister, Miss Reynolds, and the conversation turning on morality; Sir Joshua said, he did not think there was in the world any man completely wicked.

Johnson answered, "I do not know what you mean by completely wicked."

"I mean," returned Sir Joshua, "a man lost to all sense of shame." Dr. Johnson replied, that "to be completely wicked a man must be also lost to all sense of conscience."

Sir Joshua said, he thought it was exactly the same—he could see no difference.

"What!" said Johnson, "can you see no difference? I am ashamed to hear you or any body utter such nonsense; when the one relates to men, only, the other to God!"

Miss Reynolds then observed, that when shame was lost, conscience was nearly gone.

Johnson agreed that her conclusion was very just.

Dr. Johnson was displeased if he supposed himself at any time made the object of idle curiosity.

When Miss Reynolds once desired him to dine at Sir Joshua's, on a day fixed upon by herself, he readily accepted the invitation; yet having doubts as to the importance of her companions, or of her reasons for inviting him, he added, at the same time, "But I will not be made a show of."

James Mac Ardell, the mezzotinto engraver, having taken a very good print from the portrait of Rubens, came with it one morning to Sir Joshua Reynolds, to inquire if he could inform him particularly of the many titles to which Rubens had a right, in order to inscribe them properly under his print; saying, he believed that Rubens had been knighted by the kings of France, Spain, and England; was secretary of state in Flanders, and of the privy council in Spain; and had been employed in a ministerial capacity from the court of Madrid to the court of London, to negotiate a treaty of peace between the two crowns, and that he was also a magistrate of Antwerp, &c.

Dr. Johnson happened to be in the room with Sir Joshua at the time, and understanding Mac Ardell's inquiry, interfered rather abruptly, saying, "Pooh! pooh! put his name alone under the print, Peter Paul Rubens: that is full sufficient, and more than all the rest."

This advice of the Doctor was accordingly followed.

At the time that Miss Linley was in the highest esteem as a public singer, Dr. Johnson came in

the evening to drink tea with Miss Reynolds, and when he entered the room, she said to him, "See, Dr. Johnson, what a preference I give to your company; for I had an offer of a place in a box at the oratorio, to hear Miss Linley: but I would rather sit with you than hear Miss Linley sing." "And I, Madam," replied Johnson, "would rather sit with you than sit upon a throne."

The Doctor would not be surpassed even in a trifling compliment.

Several ladies being in company with Dr. Johnson, it was remarked by one of them, that a learned woman was by no means a rare character in the present age: when Johnson replied, "I have known a great many ladies who, I was told, knew Latin, but very few who know English."

A lady observed, that women surpassed men in epistolary correspondence. Johnson said, "I do not know that." "At least," said the lady, "they are most pleasing when they are in conversation."—"No, Madam," returned Johnson, "I think they are most pleasing when they hold their tongues."

A friend of Dr. Johnson's, in conversation with him, was lamenting the disagreeable situation in which those persons stood who were eminent for their witticisms, as they were perpetually expected to be saying good things—that it was a heavy tax on them.

“It is indeed,” said Johnson, “a very heavy tax on them ; a tax which no man can pay who does not steal.”

A prosing dull companion was making a long harangue to Dr. Johnson upon the *Punic war*, in which he gave nothing either new or entertaining. Johnson, afterwards, speaking of the circumstance to a friend, said, “Sir, I soon withdrew my attention from him, and thought of Tom Thumb.”

A young gentleman, who was bred to the Bar, having a great desire to be in company with Dr. Johnson, was, in consequence, invited by Miss Reynolds, Sir Joshua’s sister, to meet him at their house. When the interview took place, they fell into deep conversation on politics, and the different governments in Europe, particularly that of Venice. Miss Reynolds, who related the anecdote, said, that as it was a subject which she neither liked nor understood, she did not attend to the conversation, except to hear that the young man was humbly making his inquiries to gain all possible information from the profound knowledge of Dr. Johnson ; when her attention was suddenly attracted by the Doctor exclaiming, in a very loud and peremptory tone of voice, “Yes, Sir, I know very well, that all republican rascals think as you do!”

One morning, when Garrick paid a visit to Sir Joshua, in the course of conversation he was very

freely giving his opinion upon an eminent author of that time; he particularly condemned his dramatic works, respecting which he expressed himself in these words: "Damn his dish-clout face; his plays would never do for the stage if I did not cook them up and make prologues and epilogues for him, so that they go down with the public." He also added, "he hates you, Sir Joshua, because you do not admire the painter whom he considers as a second Corregio. "Who is that?" replied Sir Joshua. "Why, his Corregio," answered Garrick, "is Romney the painter!"

I remember to have heard Garrick complain that it was a very great fatigue to him to dine in company so frequently as his interest seemed to require. From hence we may conclude, that he considered himself as under the necessity of being a very delightful companion, which he certainly was: but had he been content to be like other persons at table, it would have then been no fatigue to him. On the same account he avoided ever going to a masquerade in any specific personification, as that would have involved him in the difficulty of supporting his character as a wit.

Sir Joshua had given to Dr. Johnson a copy of that portrait now at Knowle, the seat of the late Duke of Dorset, in which the Doctor is represented with his hands held up, and in his own short hair; it is nearly a profile, and there has been a print

taken from it, which portrait the Doctor notices this year in the following letter :

“ TO SIR JOSHUA REYNOLDS, IN LEICESTER-FIELDS.

“ DEAR SIR,

“ When I came to Lichfield, I found that my portrait had been much visited and much admired. Every man has a lurking wish to appear considerable in his native place ; and I was pleased with the dignity conferred by such a testimony of your regard.

“ Be pleased, therefore, to accept the thanks of,

“ Sir,

“ Your most obliged and humble servant,

“ *Ashbourne, in Derbyshire,* “ SAM. JOHNSON.

“ *July 17, 1771.*

“ Compliments to Miss Reynolds.”

Dr. Johnson knew nothing of the art of painting either in theory or practice, which is one proof that he could not be the author of Sir Joshua's discourses ; indeed, his imperfect sight was some excuse for his total ignorance in that department of study. Once being at dinner at Sir Joshua's, in company with many painters, in the course of conversation Richardson's Treatise on Painting happened to be mentioned, “ Ah ! ” said Johnson, “ I remember, when I was at college, I by chance found that book on my stairs : I took it up with me to my chamber, and read it through, and truly

I did not think it possible to say so much upon the art." Sir Joshua, who could not hear distinctly, desired of one of the company to be informed what Johnson had said; and it being repeated to him so loud that Johnson heard it, the Doctor seemed hurt, and added, "But I did not wish, Sir, that Sir Joshua should have been told what I then said."

The latter speech of Johnson denotes a delicacy in him, and an unwillingness to offend; and it evinces a part of his character which he has not had the credit of having ever possessed.

Sir John Hawkins also observes very well of Johnson, that of the beauties of painting, notwithstanding the many eulogiums on the art, which, after the commencement of his friendship with Sir Joshua, he inserted in his writings, he had not the least conception; indeed he said once to Sir John, that in his whole life he was never capable of discerning the least resemblance of any kind, between a picture and the subject it was designed to represent.

Those who wish to know more of his sentiments upon the art, may find a specimen in an anecdote related by Mrs. Piozzi on that subject, in the 98th page of her book.

The circumstance occurred at a dinner party at Mr. Thrale's: and as the account given by Mrs. Piozzi deserves some notice, I shall repeat that when Sir Joshua Reynolds mentioned some pic-

ture as excellent, “ It has often grieved me, Sir, (said Dr. Johnson) to see so much mind as the science of painting requires, laid out upon such perishable materials : why do you not oftener make use of copper ? I could wish your superiority in the art you profess, to be preserved on stuff more durable than canvas.” Sir Joshua urged the difficulty of procuring a plate large enough for historical subjects, and was going to raise further observations :—“ What foppish obstacles are these !” (exclaimed on a sudden Dr. Johnson :) “ Here is Thrale has a thousand ton of copper ; you may paint it all round if you will, I suppose ; it will serve him to brew in afterwards : will it not, Sir ?” (speaking to Mr. Thrale, who sat by.) Indeed, Dr. Johnson’s *affectation* of utter scorn of painting was such, that he used to say that he should sit very quietly in a room hung round with the works of the greatest masters, and never feel the slightest disposition to turn them, if their backs were outermost, unless it might be for the sake of telling Sir Joshua that he had turned them. But in his life of Savage, we find him far more cruel and unjust towards another profession, where he expresses his utter scorn of actors likewise, only because he wished to mortify Garrick, whose affluence, acquired in that profession, was the object of his envy. It was the prosperity of Sir Joshua also, as well as Garrick’s, that was the crime with Johnson ; notwithstanding the friendship and indulgence with

which they both always treated him, yet their worldly superiority created bitterness in his heart; and as he could not humble or despise the men, he therefore vented his spleen on their professions. Johnson had that weakness likewise which commonly attends men of all professions, of estimating that as the highest of which they know the most; thus we see how the bad passions may mislead the wisest men. But what most consoled his haughty spirit was to indulge himself in a philosophical contemplation of those who, possessing great abilities, were yet more wretched than himself, and as such had his compassion. Savage was his darling, in whose cause no labour nor ingenuity was to be spared in the attempt to vindicate the conduct of an impostor, chained down to misery by vice; but Savage he felt was his inferior; and had Garrick or Sir Joshua been as wretched as Savage, he would readily have done them as much service, and not have *pretended* to despise their professions.

Johnson ought to have reflected, that much of the prosperity of Sir Joshua and Garrick was a natural consequence of their virtues as well as of their abilities; and of an application incessant and untired, even to the injury of their constitutions, in order to become eminent in the departments they had adopted: whilst he was loitering away his time in idleness, and feeding at another man's table, whose profession or trade he held also in utter scorn. No wonder Johnson was not rich!

That he did not really in his heart despise painting, and was not so ignorant of its uses, may be seen in the accompanying observations on the department of portrait painting alone.

Johnson should have been informed also, that the duration of a picture does not depend on the strength or durability of the canvas on which it is painted. The canvas can be renewed as often as it may be found necessary, and the colours will in time become nearly as hard and as durable as enamel. It is by frequent and injudicious cleaning, and not by time, that pictures are destroyed.

But I shall give, as, perhaps, a more pleasing subject, some other ideas of Dr. Johnson, "that majestic teacher of moral and religious wisdom," who, in several places, thus speaks of portraits:

"Genius is chiefly exerted in historical pictures, and the art of the painter of portraits is often lost in the obscurity of his subject. But it is in painting as in life; what is greatest is not always best. I should grieve to see *Reynolds* transfer to heroes and to goddesses, to empty splendor and to airy fiction, that art, which is now employed in diffusing friendship, in renewing tenderness, in quickening the affections of the absent, and continuing the presence of the dead."

And again, "Every man is always present to himself, and has, therefore, little need of his own resemblance; nor can desire it but for the sake of those whom he loves, and by whom he hopes to

be remembered. This use of the art is a natural and reasonable consequence of affection; and though, like other human actions, it is often complicated with pride, yet even such pride is more laudable than that by which palaces are covered with pictures, that, however excellent, neither imply the owner's virtue, nor excite it."

This is certainly the best apology for portrait that has ever been given; and to it I shall here add a few observations of my own on this department of painting.

Under this view of art so well described by Johnson, it is that portrait may assume a dignity: and certain it is that all those portraits which have been executed by the higher order of painters have it; as we may perceive in them how much the genius of the artist has been able to discern, and faithfully to represent that which was characteristic and valuable in the individual which was his model, and thereby clearly demonstrated the possession of high powers.

But the reason why portrait painting is treated with so much contempt, is because there are more bad pictures of this class preserved than of any other branch in the art, on account of their local value, being the resemblance of some favourite object; whereas, the bad performances in any other branch of art having no value, are neglected and perish. It may be observed also, that more bad portrait painters get employment than bad painters

of any other class ; which adds to the comparative plenty of those works : and this excessive plenty of bad portraits, from the above causes, has, in the end, given a degraded rank to that department. But could we see in portrait all the qualities displayed of which it is capable, it would be found to contain many of the highest merits of even history itself ; and those, who treat it slightly, surely cannot have examined it with a sufficient attention, nor have had a clear idea of all its difficulties and merits. It appears to me to be, in many respects, similar to that of writing a distinct character of an individual ; which, when it is done with justice and nice discrimination, I apprehend to be a greater effort of genius than to write the life or memoir.

In addition to what I have said on this branch of the art, I must not omit that there is another cause that operates much against the dignity of portrait painting, which is, that the work is executed in the presence of witnesses who see the slow progress of the business, and are made not only sensible of the difficulty and care with which the work is done, but also the frequent failure of the artist in his intentions. They can likewise interfere with their advice and directions, and often think themselves as well qualified to judge in the affair as the painter himself : thus they see the work in all its stages of rude imperfection, all of

which tend to degrade both the artist and his art in their estimation.

But on the contrary, with respect to those efforts of the mind which are never seen by the world till they are brought to their most perfect and finished state, where all the helps and all the failures have been kept in secret, and the work shown in public only when brought to the state of perfection, it then appears like a miracle, as if struck off at once by magic power; for it has been well observed that *poets*

“ ———— Would not have half the praise they’ve got,
Was it but known what they discreetly blot.”

There is still another cause which has its weight against the importance of portraits, even sometimes when executed by good painters, as in particular instances it has rendered them ridiculous; this has happened when the artist has submitted to the ignorant interference and dictates of his employer, contrary to his own better judgement.

Sir Joshua preserved himself from this disgrace with eminent policy and skill.

I cannot quit this subject without noticing that it may be observed that every portrait is a compound, the different parts of which are supplied by the painter, assisted by the person who sits to be portrayed. The external form and shape of the features are the part required and taken from

the individual who is to be represented in the picture: but the character, the degree of mental power, and peculiarity of disposition, expressed in the portrait, are greatly dependent on the painter, and it is in the representation of those that he unconsciously infuses the prominent qualities of his own individual nature and turn of mind. Therefore, all portraits of the same person, when executed by different painters, will, from the above cause, differ from each other; although each of them may resemble the external form of the individual they are intended to represent.

In portraiture, perhaps, the first thing required is mechanical dexterity.

In history, certainly, the first requisite is great mental powers.

But to attain superior excellence in either, each is required in each.

But the department of portrait alone may be divided into different classes as practised by different professors according to their abilities and inclinations. Three are distinct, for instance; and first those portraits which are true but not ingenious, where their merit consists in a careful endeavour at similitude to the person represented, but in a manner dry, laboured, and tasteless: secondly, those which are ingenious but not true; in these much skill is often to be found, but then the pure imitation of nature has been sacrificed to ideal graces and adscititious beauties; Lely and

Kneller are instances; the consequence of which is, that manner and sameness become the poor substitutes for truth, variety, and nature. Such works are too much like each other to be like any thing else, and create no interest; but that order of portrait which does honour to the department is both true and ingenious, as may be exemplified in the works of Rembrandt, Velasquez, Vandyke, Reynolds, and Titian.

After all that has been said, there can be no doubt but that a decided superiority must be given to historical painting, when it is of the highest order, as it requires, of necessity, a much greater mass of acquired knowledge of every kind; also, because that in it is contained a large portion of the excellence of portrait, if not the whole: and when portraiture is compared with grand composition, it bears but as a part, and, of consequence, a part is much easier to accomplish than a whole.

Yet I will venture to say, that, in certain instances, I have seen groupes of portraits by Titian which have contained the essence of history; and history by Raffaele which contained the essence of portrait: and it can scarcely be denied, that portrait, in its greatest degree of perfection, becomes a species of history, as it must possess its first merits, character, and expression; whilst history is not degraded by the introduction of dignified portrait. Therefore I am of opinion that it is a most useful and necessary part of the practice

of an historical painter, that he sometimes should recur to the close imitation of nature by employing himself in portrait, and not survey it with an improper pride. A strong proof of an ingenious and speculative mind is its being able to gain instruction from every quarter, even from whence it might be least expected.

The events recorded in reference to portrait painting, bring to my recollection one or two little anecdotes connected with the art; in particular, I remember once, in conversation with a friend, observing that I thought the highest merit and the greatest difficulty in painting portraits were to make them all appear to represent ladies or gentlemen.

“Undoubtedly,” answered my friend, “it must indeed be very difficult for the painter to do it, as nature itself seems to have found it no easy business by having so very rarely made them such in appearance.”

While on the subject of portrait, I may be allowed to observe, that it is a very desirable thing that the name should be written on the back of every portrait, signifying the person it represents.

I remember a letter from Mr. Locke to Collings, of which the following is an extract:

“Pray get Sir Godfrey to write on the back of Lady Marsham’s picture, Lady Marsham; and on the back of mine John Locke, 1704. This he did to Mr. Molyneaux’s: it is necessary to be done,

or else the pictures of private persons are lost in two or three generations; and so the picture loses its value, it not being known whom it was made to represent."

Mr. Locke died about a month after this letter was written.

Sir Joshua himself, indeed, never did this, nor even marked his own name, except in the instance of Mrs. Siddons's portrait as the Tragic Muse, when he wrote his name upon the hem of her garment.

With respect to that excellent portrait of our great tragic actress in which Reynolds has thus written his name on the skirt of the drapery, Mrs. Siddons told me herself that when she first saw the picture in its finished state, she went near to examine the pattern of this which appeared to be a curious classic embroidery, such being at that time much in fashion, and she then perceived it contained his name; when making the remark to Sir Joshua, who was present, he very politely said, "I could not lose the honour this opportunity offered to me for my name going down to posterity on the hem of your garment."

I remember to have heard General Paoli declare, that he could decide on the character and disposition of a man whose letter he had seen.

Notwithstanding this assertion may be carried something beyond what we may be inclined to allow, yet it is not destitute of truth to such as are nice discriminators of character.

If such is possible to be the case from merely seeing a letter, how much more information may we suppose to be drawn from a fine portrait; and in this particular excellence of character, the portraits of Reynolds most certainly surpass all other portraits existing in the world. This brings to my remembrance the anecdote told of Bernini, the famous sculptor, that Charles the First having a desire that Bernini should make his bust, sent over his portrait, painted by Vandyke, which exhibited three views of his face; and when the picture was presented to Bernini, who did not know whom it represented, he immediately exclaimed, "My God! whose portrait is this?—the man will not come to a timely end."

In the course of this year, Sir Joshua took another trip to Paris, from which he had scarcely returned when Mr. Bennet Langton renewed, in a very pressing manner, an invitation which he had given to him and Goldsmith to spend some part of the autumn with him and his lady, the Countess of Rothes, at their seat in Lincolnshire. With this obliging request, however, he was unable to comply, and Goldsmith, in a letter to Mr. Langton, declining the invitation on the part of both, says, "Reynolds is just returned from Paris, and finds himself now in the case of a truant, that must make up for his idle time by diligence; we have therefore agreed to postpone our journey till next summer."

On the 25th of July, in this year, an installation of the Knights of the Garter took place at Windsor Castle, a ceremony which had not been seen before for many years ; and the King had expressed a desire that Sir Joshua might be present, which of course he readily complied with, but in some degree to his cost, for the show being a rare one, the multitude of persons assembled was immense, insomuch that in the crowd Sir Joshua lost his hat, and also a gold snuff-box.

In fact, at this period Sir Joshua may be said to have been at the zenith of his eminence, as we see him now employed in pourtraying the most illustrious personages in every different department, whilst his intimacy was sedulously sought after by all degrees of persons.

Much of the attention which even Goldsmith personally met with, was undoubtedly owing to the patronage of his admired friend ; yet Sir Joshua used to say, that Goldsmith looked at, or considered, public notoriety, or fame, as one great parcel, to the whole of which he laid claim, and whoever partook of any part of it, whether dancer, singer, slight of hand man, or tumbler, deprived him of his right, and drew off the attention of the world from himself, and which he was striving to gain. Notwithstanding this, he lamented that whenever he entered into a mixed company, he struck a kind of awe on them, that deprived him of the enjoyment and freedom of society, and

which he then made it his endeavour to dispel by playing wanton and childish pranks in order to bring himself to the wished-for level.

It was very soon after my first arrival in London, where every thing appeared new and wonderful to me, that I expressed to Sir Joshua my impatient curiosity to see Dr. Goldsmith, and he promised I should do so on the first opportunity. Soon afterwards Goldsmith came to dine with him, and immediately on my entering the room, Sir Joshua, with a designed abruptness, said to me, "This is Dr. Goldsmith; pray why did you wish to see him?" I was much confused by the suddenness of the question, and answered, in my hurry, "Because he is a notable man." This, in one sense of the word, was so very contrary to the character and conduct of Goldsmith, that Sir Joshua burst into a hearty laugh, and said, that Goldsmith should, in future, always be called the notable man.

What I meant, however, to say was, that he was a man of note, or eminence.

He appeared to me to be very unaffected and good-natured; but he was totally ignorant of the art of painting, and this he often confessed with much gaiety.

It has been often said of Goldsmith, that he was ever desirous of being the object of attention in all companies where he was present; which the following anecdote may serve to prove.

On a summer's excursion to the continent he accompanied a lady and her two beautiful daughters into France and Flanders, and often expressed a little displeasure at perceiving that more attention was paid to them than to himself. On their entering a town, I think Antwerp, the populace surrounded the door of the hotel at which they alighted, and testified a desire to see those beautiful young women; and the ladies, willing to gratify them, came into a balcony at the front of the house, and Goldsmith with them: but perceiving that it was not himself who was the object of admiration, he presently withdrew, with evident signs of mortification, saying, as he went out, "I can assure you, ladies, it is not always with me as at present, for there are times and places where I am also the object of admiration!"

One day when Drs. Goldsmith and Johnson were at dinner with Sir Joshua, a poem, by a poet already alluded to, was presented to Sir Joshua, by his servant, from the author. Goldsmith immediately laid hold of it, and began to read it, and at every line cut almost through the paper with his finger nail, crying out, "What d——d nonsense is this?" for the Doctor could not bear to hear of another's fame; when Sir Joshua caught it out of his hands, saying, "No, no, don't do so; you shall not spoil my book neither;" seeing the weakness of Goldsmith, in thus exposing his envious humour.

Sir Joshua was always cautious to preserve an unblemished character, and careful not to make any man his enemy. I remember when he was told of some very indiscreet speech or action of Goldsmith, he quickly said, "What a fool he is thus to commit himself, when he has so much more cause to be careful of his reputation than I have of mine!" well recollecting that even the most trivial circumstance which tells against an eminent person, will be remembered as well as those in his favour; and that the world watch those who are distinguished for their abilities with a jealous eye.

Sir William Temple, in his Memoirs, relates a surprizing instance of sagacity in a macaw, one of the parrot genus of the largest kind, which occurred under his own observation. His relation is, indeed, a very wonderful one; but I am the more apt to give it credit, from being myself a witness of the following instance of apparent intellect in a bird of this species, and therefore can vouch for its truth: at the same time I hope to be excused for giving what I consider merely as a curious circumstance, and not to incur the accusation of vanity, in this instance at least, by making a weak endeavour to extol my own poor work, for very poor it was.

In the early part of the time that I passed with Sir Joshua as his scholar, I had, for the sake of practice, painted the portrait of one of the female

servants ; but my performance had no other merit than that of being a strong likeness.

Sir Joshua had a large macaw, which he often introduced into his pictures, as may be seen from several prints. This bird was a great favourite, and was always kept in the dining parlour, where he became a nuisance to this same house-maid, whose department it was to clean the room after him ; of course, they were not upon very good terms with each other.

The portrait, when finished was brought into the parlour, one day after dinner, to be shown to the family, that they might judge of the progress I had made. It was placed against a chair, while the macaw was in a distant part of the room, so that he did not immediately perceive the picture as he walked about on the floor ; but when he turned round and saw the features of his enemy, he quickly spread his wings, and in great fury ran to it, and stretched himself up to bite at the face. Finding, however, that it did not move, he then bit at the hand, but perceiving it remain inanimate, he proceeded to examine the picture behind, and then, as if he had satisfied his curiosity, left it, and walked again to a distant part of the room ; but whenever he turned about, and again saw the picture, he would, with the same action of rage, repeatedly attack it. The experiment was afterwards repeated, on various occasions, in the presence of Edmund Burke, Dr. Johnson, Dr. Gold-

smith, and most of Sir Joshua's friends, and never failed of success ; and what made it still more remarkable was, that when the bird was tried by any other portrait, he took no notice of it whatever. Sir Joshua observed, that it was almost as extraordinary an instance as the old story of the bunch of grapes which deceived the birds, saying, " that birds and beasts were as good judges of pictures as men are."

On the 10th of December in this year, Sir Joshua delivered his fourth discourse, whose object was to give a view of those general ideas from whence arises that presiding principle which regulates the art of Painting, under the various heads of Invention, Expression, Colouring, and Drapery ; after which, he took a view of the two separate styles, the Grand and the Ornamental, in Historical Composition, specifying the schools in which examples of each were to be found ; to this he added a sketch of what he designated as the Composite style formed from local habits and customs, as well as on a partial observation of nature.

To enter into any thing like a specific detail of subjects so grand and so extensive, would be to copy the whole of this excellent discourse, which may, in fact, be compared to a cabinet of gems, as combining, within its circumscribed limits, every thing rich and rare ; yet as my plan requires me to give a view of his opinions, as well as of his actions, through a life marked with the excellencies

both of the man and the painter, I trust I shall be indulged in embodying a few of his well-digested ideas into this part of my work, directed rather to the reader of taste than to the artist.

To form a judgement from his opening, one must see immediately the claim which Painting has upon the human mind; as he lays it down as a principle that the value and rank of every art is in proportion to the mental labour employed in it, or the mental pleasure produced by it; wherefore, as this principle is observed or neglected, the profession of the painter becomes either a liberal art, or merely a mechanical trade.

This principle he even considered as discriminative in the art itself, stating, that this exertion of mind, which is the only circumstance that truly ennobles the art, makes the great distinction between the Roman and Venetian schools.

With respect to Invention in painting, he did not apply that term merely to the invention of the subject, such being, for the most part, supplied by the historian or the poet: but still the choice must rest with the artist, for as no subject can be proper that is not generally interesting, so it ought to be either some eminent instance of heroic action, or of heroic suffering, of spirit or of fortitude, accompanied, either in the action or in the object, by something in which mankind are universally concerned, and which strikes powerfully upon the public sympathy.

Invention, then, he defined by observing, that whenever a story is related, every man forms a picture in his mind of the action and expression of the persons employed ; and therefore what we call invention in a painter, is the power of representing this mental picture on canvas.

Minuteness of representation in the concomitant parts of a story, he thought unnecessary, any further than that they should not be unnatural, but judiciously contrived, so as not to strike the spectator more than they did himself at the first conception of his composition : for as the general idea constitutes real excellence, so all smaller things, however perfect in their way, must be sacrificed without mercy to the greater. To every kind of painting, he considered this rule as applicable ; particularly in portraits, where the grace, and even the likeness consists more in taking the general air, than in observing the exact similitude of every feature.

In this part of his discourse he gave some hints by no means useless to every day connoisseurs, saying, that we know well enough, when we analyze a picture, the difficulty and subtilty with which an artist adjusts the back-ground, drapery and masses of light ; we know that a considerable part of the grace and effect of his picture depends upon them : but then this art is so much concealed, even to a judicious eye, that no remains of any of these subordinate parts occur to the memory when the picture is not present.

As the great end of the art is to strike the imagination, so the painter is to make no ostentation of the means by which this is done ; the spectator is only to feel the result in his bosom : an inferior artist, indeed, he acknowledged, is unwilling that any part of his industry should be lost upon the spectator ; he takes as much pains to discover, as the greater artist does to conceal, the marks of his subordinate assiduity. Thus in works of the lower kind, every thing appears studied, and encumbered ; it is all boastful art and open affectation. “ The ignorant often part from such pictures with wonder in their mouths, and indifference in their hearts !”

In Expression, Sir Joshua considered the painter as having difficulties to contend with, very different from those of the poet or the historian : he has but one sentence to utter, but one moment to exhibit or embody ; he cannot expatiate, or impress the mind with a progression of circumstances which excite veneration for the hero or the saint ; he has no means of giving an idea of the dignity of the mind, but by that external appearance which grandeur of thought does generally, though not always, impress on the countenance, and by that correspondence of figure to sentiment and situation, which all men wish, but cannot command.

As the painter, therefore, cannot make his hero talk like a great man, he must make him look like one ; for which reason, he ought to be well studied

in the analysis of those circumstances which constitute dignity of appearance in real life : but as in Invention, so likewise in Expression, care must be taken not to run into particularities, and those expressions alone ought to be given to the figures, which their respective situations generally produce.

As a principle, alike essential to the artist and the connoisseur, with respect to colouring, he observed, that to give a general air of grandeur at first view, all trifling or artful play of little lights, or an attention to a variety of tints, is to be avoided ; and that a quietness and simplicity must reign over the whole of a picture, to which a breadth of uniform and simple colour will very much contribute.

In this branch of the art, he considered grandeur of effect to be produced in two different ways, which seem entirely opposed to each other ; the one being the reducing of the colours to little more than *chiaro scuro*, as practised in the school of Bologna ; the other, as in the Roman and Florentine schools, making the colours very distinct and forcible ; whilst still, the presiding principle of both these manners is simplicity. For though the varied tints of the last mentioned schools have not that kind of harmony which is produced by other means, still they have that effect of grandeur which was intended. “ Perhaps these distinct colours strike the mind more forcibly, from there

not being any great union between them; as martial music, which is intended to rouse the nobler passions, has its effect from its sudden and strongly marked transitions from one note to another, which that style of music requires; whilst in that which is intended to move the softer passions, the notes imperceptibly melt into one another."

In drapery, the great painter must, as he observed, adhere to the foregoing principles, carefully avoiding the debasement of his conceptions with minute discriminations of stuffs, which mark the inferior style; for "with him the cloathing is neither woollen nor linen, nor silk, satin, or velvet: it is drapery; it is nothing more." He acknowledged, indeed, that the art of disposing the foldings of the drapery, makes a very considerable part of the painter's study; but that to make it merely natural, is a mechanical operation, to which neither genius nor taste are required, whilst at the same time it demands the nicest judgement to dispose the drapery, so as that the folds shall have an easy communication, gracefully following each other, with such natural negligence as to look like the effect of chance, and at the same time shew the figure under it to the utmost advantage.

In adverting to the various schools, he considered the Roman, Florentine, and Bolognese, as the three great ones in the epic style, whilst the best of the French painters were to be considered as a colony from the former of the three; but the

Venetian, Flemish, and Dutch schools, he ranked beneath them, as all professing to depart from the great purposes of painting, and catching at applause by inferior qualities.

It will be readily understood from this, that he esteemed the ornamental style as of inferior consideration in comparison with the other; for as mere elegance was their principal object, particularly in the Venetian school, and as they seemed more willing to dazzle than to affect, so it could be no injury to them to suppose that their practice is useful only to its proper end; for as what may heighten the elegant may degrade the sublime: so the simplicity, nay, severity, of the great manner, is almost incompatible with this comparatively sensual style.

He then boldly laid it down as a maxim, that “such as suppose that the great style might happily be blended with the ornamental, that the simple, grave, and majestic dignity of Raffaele could unite with the glow and bustle of a Paolo or Tintoret, are totally mistaken. The principles by which each is attained, are so contrary to each other, that they seem, in my opinion, incompatible, and as impossible to exist together, as that in the mind the most sublime ideas and the lowest sensuality should at the same time be united.”

To mark the distinction, therefore, more strongly between the two principal styles, he added, that however contradictory it may be in geometry, it

is yet true in matters of taste, that many little things will never make a great one ; that the sublime impresses the mind at once with one great idea, as at a single blow ; whilst the elegant may be, and is, produced by repetition, by an accumulation of many minute circumstances.

After giving a professional and philosophical view of the various schools in these styles, Sir Joshua observed, that of those who have practised the composite style, and have succeeded in this perilous attempt, perhaps the foremost is Corregio ; his style being founded on modern grace and elegance, to which is superadded something of the simplicity of the grand style ; conspiring with which effect are breadth of light and colour, the general ideas of the drapery, and an uninterrupted flow of outline.

He then allowed, that, next to him, if not his equal, was Parmegiano, whom he described as dignifying the genteelness of modern effeminacy, by uniting it with the simplicity of the ancients, and the grandeur and severity of Michael Angelo. He confessed, indeed, that these two extraordinary men, by endeavouring to give the utmost degree of grace, have sometimes, perhaps, exceeded its boundaries, and have fallen into the most hateful of all hateful qualities—*affectation*.

Still did he adhere to the opinion, that the errors of genius are pardonable, at the same time that none, even of the more exalted painters, are free

from them ; but then they have taught us, by the rectitude of their general practice, to correct their own affected or accidental deviation.

Sir Joshua then closed this elaborate and memorable discourse—a discourse so well adapted to the world at large, as well as to artists, by shewing, that works of genius and of science, if founded upon the general truths of nature, will live for ever ; whilst those which depend upon the localities of time and place, or partial views of nature, and on the fluctuations of fashion, must inevitably fade away with those circumstances which have raised them from obscurity. “ Present time and future must be considered as rivals, and he who solicits the one must expect to be discountenanced by the other.”

Before I finish the year 1771, I may mention the sale of Jonathan Richardson’s great and curious collection of prints and original drawings. These had been collected by his father and himself, and were to be sold by old Langford the auctioneer at his room under the Piazza, Covent Garden. I attended every evening of the sale, by Sir Joshua’s desire, and much to my own gratification, as I had never before seen such excellent works. I purchased for Sir Joshua those lots which he had marked, consisting of a vast number of extraordinary fine drawings and prints by and from old masters ; which greatly increased his valuable collection. One drawing in particular I

remember, a descent from the cross by Rembrant; in which were to be discovered sixteen alterations, or *pentimenti*, as the Italians term it, made by Rembrant, on bits of paper stuck upon the different parts of the drawing, and finished according to his second thoughts.

1772.

ÆTAT. 48.

THE fame and excellence of Sir Joshua Reynolds could not fail to draw on him the animadversions of those who aimed at the character of critics, and who, to preserve that character, judged it necessary to mix blame with their warmest praise, lest they should incur the name of flattery, and in this they were doubtless stimulated by the *good old rule*, that the first part of a knowing critic's duty is to discover blemishes. As a specimen of this, I shall extract a passage from a work published in this year, (1772,) under the title of "Letters concerning the present State of England," in which the writer has blended a strange mixture of praise and censure; and, what is most remarkable in it is, that the part of criticism which is the most difficult to execute with ability, that is the praise, is here given with much knowledge, discrimination, and truth; and the censure, on the contrary, is either unintelligible or untrue.

This passage is as follows: " Reynolds is original in his manner, and as bold and free in his style as any painter that Italy ever produced. Freedom is, indeed, his principal characteristic; to this he seems to sacrifice every other consideration: he has, however, two manners; in one he checks the extreme freedom of his dashing pencil, *works* his figures more into an expression, that may, in comparison with his other pieces, be called minute; in these the colouring is natural and good;—(*so far is a very just critique;*) but in his bolder, better works, the colours are graceful rather than chaste;—(*this is absolute nonsense;*) they have the ease of drawings, and mark how little attention was given by the artist to make them durable. In his attitudes he is generally full of grace, ease, and variety; he can throw his figures at will into the boldest variations, and ventures at some postures by which inferior painters would invariably damn their works—(*an excellent remark and true*). His learning in his art is great—(*very just*)—and this has made him slight colours too much on comparison with drawing; the latter alone is certainly superior to the former alone;—(*exactly the reverse is the truth;*)—but the true beauty of fine colouring is an essential, and should never be neglected. (*Sir Joshua's constant aim was colour.*) In a word this painter is more a man of genius than an agreeable artist;—(*he was both in an eminent degree;*)

—there is more fire than nature in his works ; more enegy than softness ;—(*no painter that ever lived had more softness ;*)—more ease than beauty ; such as will rather awaken knowledge than kindle pleasure” —(*this is false*).

In contradistinction to the unfounded criticisms on Reynolds’s style of painting, already given as extracted from “ Letters from England,” I trust that Sir Joshua’s own remarks on the subject of criticisms on the art will not here be misplaced.

“ When a picture by a gaudy copier, done in a false and bad taste, is shewn to some pretended connoisseurs, who may have been used to see good pictures, they will immediately, and properly, disapprove of it : not because it is in reality in a bad taste, but because it has a different appearance from those pictures which have been shewn to them as the best ; for in other matters it will be found that their taste is utterly vulgar, false, and depraved ; whilst he who has formed to himself a really good taste* will be uniform throughout in his judgement.

“ Out of the great number of critics in this metropolis, who all pretend to knowledge in pictures, the greater part must be mere pretenders only. Taste does not come by chance : it is a long and laborious task to acquire it ; the mind,

* What we call *Taste* is a kind of *extempore* judgement ; it is a settled habit of distinguishing, without staying to attend to rules, or ratiocination, and arises from long use and experience.

like a pendulum, must waver this way and that way, before it fixes upon the centre.”

Again, speaking of critics, he says—

“ We find the noblest and boldest passages to have been particularly pitched upon for impertinent criticism. These are the divine boldnesses which, in their very nature, provoke ignorance and short-sightedness to shew themselves; and whoever is capable of attaining the greatest height, knows for certain he shall be attacked by such as cannot reach it.”

After this judgement of Sir Joshua's upon critics and criticism on the art, I shall venture to give some opinions of my own on the subject, particularly as they are not in opposition to those recorded.

It has often struck me as a matter of wonder, why we should so frequently meet with persons who are good judges of literature, yet so seldom with those who are competent judges of the graphic arts: and the only way I know to account for this seeming paradox is, to conclude, that the language of the art, as it has been termed, and expressed by the pencil, is, to the bulk of the world, obscure, or at least far from being familiar to them: yet all conceive themselves qualified to be critics on paintings. As to those numerous connoisseurs in art, whose essays we commonly meet with in the inferior publications, such as daily newspapers, &c., &c., it is both curious and diverting to ob-

serve the very odd remarks which they make on the arts, from not having sufficiently studied them. This incompetency to the undertaking gives such an air of childish innocence to their prattle, that, whilst it has no bad motive—no disguised malice at the bottom, it seems a pity to check it; and the severest punishment I would inflict upon them is, that they should be enabled to view their own criticisms with an artist's conception, which would be the most effectual means of putting a stop to such inanity; for many of those whose criticisms on pictures make them appear to be so very silly in the eyes of artists, are frequently men of very good understanding, and show much judgement in many other matters which come within the sphere of their study, and they would feel severely the contemptible figure they make in uttering opinions frequently so weak, that boys in the schools of art would scorn, and laugh at them: and although these critics conceal their names, and are themselves hid in obscurity, yet, as no one can bear to appear contemptible in his own eyes, surely a man can find no pleasure in its being proved to him that he has played the fool. This description alludes to the attempts at criticism by the innocent and ignorant; but we have to lament, that, but too often, ephemeral criticism is made the instrument of some base and partial purpose of interest. At times it proceeds from some ill-starred wight, who pines with envy at

the sight of those powers which he cannot attain. He fain would blast that fruit which he cannot gather. Every human work, besides its excellencies, does most commonly contain a large proportion of defects; and to point out those defects is too often the sole gratification which feeds the vanity of the superficially learned; who imagine that they are exalted in the same proportion as they contribute to the degradation of every pretender to talents. It also, in some degree, soothes the feelings of the unsuccessful and malignant, by persuading them that they have still the power of making their more fortunate competitors, at least for a time, as uncomfortable as themselves: they likewise feel at the moment as if they were really superior to the work over which they seem to triumph—which acts as a cordial to their self-opinion—as an opiate to tortured pride. But it should be recollected, that the critic, in reviewing the object of his criticism, has the advantage of the inventor's experience to assist him, and, thus prepared, finds it not difficult to point out how the work might have been done better; when, perhaps, from his own resources alone, he might not have been able to conceive at first how the work could have been done at all.

Criticism, when poured out by the weak or vulgar, has, in some cases, very bad effects. It has a tendency to intimidate the modest and inexperienced spirit, who dreads the clamour of pre-

sumptuous ignorance usurping an office, and peremptorily pretending to set rules for those powers which it cannot comprehend; and it overawes that spirit of exertion which cannot operate with full effect, unless it be perfectly free from fear of controul. To 'snatch a grace beyond the rules of art' is only to be hoped for by those who defy the puny critic and his censures;—the steed which attempts a leap beyond its usual course should fear no check from the rein, as it would inevitably cause both the horse and his rider to fall.

Thus we see that criticism has the fatal tendency to paralyze those laudable and energetic efforts to produce works, without which criticism could not exist: criticism is the child that devours its own parent!

The only good that possibly can accrue from the observations of those obtrusive minor critics on works of living artists (for as to the dead, there is always justice administered to those against whom no evil passions operate) is, that sometimes, by chance, they may throw out a useful hint; and also, that the noise they make serves in the place of an advertisement. But if what they have to say is not the truth, the little hurt falls only on themselves; yet, if truth is on their side, they have an indubitable right to speak it. Notwithstanding, however, that at times their ignorance, or their pertness, is displeasing, they still should be

viewed with complacency. In these observations, indeed, it is but fair to state, that I allude solely to those who, being unable to make a figure equal to their ambition, in a higher department, and yet unwilling to be set wholly aside, consent to practise the virtue of humility, patiently join the retinue of those who are more fortunate than themselves, and are to be considered as proper appendages to eminence, or in the capacity of train-bearers: and although the office they appear in is to hold up to public view that superfluous part of the garment of merit which is nearest to the dust, yet it still adds dignity even to genius: whilst *real criticism*, like a tender parent, improves as it admonishes;—the justice of its award softening even the severity of its censure. But from the depressed critic (who, I apprehend, is frequently more the object of pity than of anger) much commendation ought not to be expected or required; no more than song and melody might have been looked for, in their heaviness, from the captive Jews in Babylon.

In the course of this year, Sir Joshua painted a particularly fine picture, especially in point of expression, of Resignation, and dedicated the print taken from it to Dr. Goldsmith, with some lines under it quoted from his poem of the Deserted Village. This seems to have been done by Sir Joshua as a return of the compliment to Goldsmith, who had dedicated the poem to him: and

it drew the following poetical tribute from the talents of Dr. Willis, which, as it relates to those circumstances attending the picture, together with some tolerable criticism as well as praise, I shall insert.

“ ‘Optimum ducem naturam sequimur,
 —————Quod sit meritus ferat.’

“ Hail Painting! sweet companion of the Nine,
 For thee shall Taste, the Rose, and Myrtle twine.
 Amazing art! whose magic touch can throw
 O'er canvas Nature's animated glow!
 Bid heroes' eyes glare with heroic fire,
 And love's soft victims languish with desire.
 Great Nature's shade! thy mimic power can raise
 The varying passions, like the poet's lays.
 No more in search of science let us stray
 Where Maro sung, and Cæsar bore the sway:
 Britain can cherish arts; her meadows yield
 As pure an air as does the Appian field;
 Our monarch reigns, the noblest of his kind,
 Art's great restorer—ne'er to merit blind:
 For him shall Painting lasting trophies raise,
 Historic pencils tell his warlike praise;
 For him shall Poësy, fir'd with Pindar's flame,
 To after ages consecrate his fame:
 For him, with ardour, ev'ry art shall join;
 With Alfred's name, rever'd, his blooming laurels twine.
 'Tis thine, Oh Reynolds! to possess the art,
 By speaking canvas, to affect the heart;
 See! *Resignation* settled on that eye;
 Nature can only with thy pencil vie!
 Hail, *Resignation* source of true repose,
 Thou best composer of all human woes:
 Oh come, sweet friend! thy balmy joys prepare:
 My genius droops, relax'd by constant care.

Thy moral picture checks my mournful strain,
 Some power unseen forbids me to complain ;
 Tells me, kind Hope dawns sweet from yonder gloom,
 On years to come awaits a happier doom.
 Cheer'd with the thought, I bend to Heav'n's high will ;
 Thy moral picture shall support me still.
 Where genius shines, its pleasing power I feel,
 Nor strive my admiration to conceal.
 Truth guides my pen ; I scorn the treach'rous wiles
 Of servile flattery, affected smiles :
 Truth needs no dress to make her beauty shine,
 So poets paint her naked and divine ;
 And genuine Taste may pleasure still acquire,
 Whilst THOU canst paint, and Goldsmith tune the *Lyre* !

The subject of the foregoing lines calls to my remembrance a fragment of a little poem composed by Miss F. Reynolds, youngest surviving sister of Sir Joshua, which surely are possessed of a simplicity and piety highly creditable to her heart, as she in them shews that religion is the only true source of resignation under the evils of this world.

“ Youth's flow'ry paths I now no more shall tread,
 But those of age, with horrors overspread :
 Where the lorn wanderers, melancholy, slow,
 Sad spectres, monuments of woe !
 Ruins of life ! no semblance left by time,
 No trace remaining of their manhood's prime,
 Oppress'd with gloom, to cares and fears a prey,
 Lonely, forlorn, they linger through the day,
 Pursuing nought, save only to obtain
 A little space the dregs of life to drain ;
 Tenacious still of what they ne'er enjoy,
 Wishing to rest, and yet afraid to die !
 No cheerful ray illumines the dusky vale,
 No balmy fragrance floating in the gale,

But dark malignant clouds, and noxious dew,
 Hang on the cypress sad, and mournful yew;
 In sable weeds, which flow with solemn sweep,
 The weeping willow seems indeed to weep.

From this sad prospect of my future days,
 Bereft of all that nature form'd to please,
 Involuntary oft I turn mine eye,
 Where youth, and hope, and sweet affections lie;
 Where liberal Nature in profusion pours
 Rich herbage, balmy springs, and fragrant flow'rs:
 The landscape smiles around in beauty gay,
 And cheers the sense with ev'ry charm of May.
 Alas! not me to cheer—invidious Time
 Allows me not to taste of Nature's prime;
 Holds up his glass, and bids me mark how low,
 How black the sand, that yet remains to flow.

Methought a veil, of lucid rays compos'd,
 Disparting wide, an heav'nly form disclos'd;
 And as the ground her beauteous foot imprest,
 Hope's cheerful ray seem'd kindling in my breast.
 With winning sweetness, yet majestic air,
 "I come," she cried, "thy gloomy soul to cheer;
 To guide thy erring will, thy passions sooth,
 And make the rugged paths of nature smooth,
 That vale below that fills thy soul with dread,
 And seems with gloom and horrors overspread,
 Owes its appearance to thy troubled mind,
 Deaf to the voice of truth—to reason blind:
 'Tis I alone that can the film remove,
 That dims thy sight, and make yon gloomy grove
 Smile with immortal fruits, and bloom with flow'rs
 Fairer than poets feign of Paphian bow'rs.
 I am RELIGION, whose all-powerful ray
 Beams on the darken'd mind celestial day;—
 Points out the path that leads to pure delight;
 And proves this truth—*Whatever is is right!*"

The eminence of Sir Joshua was now so high,
 that the quantity of complimentary verses which

were addressed to him would fill a volume, and would be tedious to repeat; but the following lines I cannot omit, as I think them an excellent instance of the mock heroic, though intended as very serious, and very exquisite. Surely the Genius of Affectation is never so busy, nor triumphs half so much, as when he attends at the elbow of his favourite poets, and makes them speak thus:—

“ Feel ye

What Reynolds felt, when first the Vatican
Unbarr'd her gates, and to his raptur'd eye
Gave all the god-like energy that flow'd
From Michael's pencil.”—

The affectation in these lines appears still more gross when we recur to the grand simplicity of the character of him to whom they allude, or compare them with those which were last recited.

In the discourse delivered this year, (1772,) on the 10th of December, Sir Joshua concluded his series of remarks begun in one of the former years.

His grand object in this display was to incite the young students to consider the attainment of the higher excellencies of the art as an acquisition of the first importance, though not to the total exclusion of a search after the subordinate qualifications; which, however, he considered as but of minor consequence: at the same time warning his hearers, that caution and circumspection were not to be lost sight of in the eagerness of pursuit.

On this part of his subject he particularly noted, that judgement was necessary not only in the acquisition of these excellencies, but also in their application: for though many would bear to be united, and some even be improved from the union; yet still there were others which, though perfect in themselves, were of a nature so discordant with their companions, that nothing but incongruity could be produced by their mutual introduction.

Here too his meaning was fully exemplified by his illustrations: for, laying it down as a truth that the expression of *passion* was not in unison with *perfect beauty*, all the passions producing some degree of distortion and deformity, even in the most beautiful countenances, so those that attempted to preserve beauty, where strong passions ought to be considered as operating powerfully upon the personages represented, must inevitably sacrifice a superior excellence, as *Guido* has done in many instances, particularly in his *Judith*, the daughter of *Herodias*, *Andromeda*, nay, even in some of the mothers' countenances in the *Slaughter of the Innocents*, which have, thus, little more expression than he has given to his "Venus attired by the Graces."

One principle which he had here in view was to guard the artist against the effects of that false criticism which so often marks the writings of men who are not of the profession; who being unable to find out the real beauties of a performance, merely

find out that which they are before-hand resolved to discover ; and therefore not only praise excellencies which cannot with propriety exist together, but even dilate upon the expression of mixed passions, a thing which his accurate knowledge of the human countenance and human heart well knew to be a thing impossible.

He even proved his position from the theory and practice of the ancients, who always described their Jupiter as possessed in the aggregate of all those great qualities which were separately enjoyed by subordinate deities ; but yet, when they called in the aid of art to represent him, they confined his character to that of majesty alone, without attempting to delineate the others.

At this part of his discourse he took the opportunity of shewing how much the great Pliny himself resembled some of our modern connoisseurs, when, with something like the cant of modern criticism, he stated that the spectator might discover no less than three different and distinct characters in a statue of Paris, executed by the famous sculptor Euphranor, and in which were to be seen the dignity of a judge of the goddesses, the lover of Helen, and the conqueror of Achilles ; adding, “ A statue in which you endeavour to unite stately dignity, youthful elegance, and stern valour, must surely possess none of those to any great degree.” After this he adds, what will be best expressed in his own words : “ I do not discourage the younger

students from the noble attempt of uniting all the excellencies of art, but to make them aware, that, besides the difficulties which attend every arduous attempt, there is a peculiar difficulty in the choice of the excellencies which ought to be united. I wish you to attend to this, that you may try yourselves, whenever you are capable of that trial, what you can, and what you cannot do; and that, instead of dissipating your natural faculties over the immense field of possible excellence, you may choose some particular walk in which you may exercise all your powers; in order each of you to be the first in his way."

In exemplification of the judicious choice of excellence, he observed, that Lodovico Caracci, in particular, was well acquainted with the works both of Corregio and of the Venetian painters, and also knew the principles by which they produced those pleasing effects which, at first glance, prepossess us so much in their favour; but then he stated, that he took only as much from each as would embellish, but not overpower, that manly strength and energy of style which form his peculiar character.

In speaking of *Styles* he also shewed, that although the *Ornamental* cannot, with propriety, be considered as a principal, it is still expedient to be called in to soften the harshness and mitigate the severity of the great style, which latter being that of the greatest masters, Michael Angelo, and Raf-

faelle, is principally to be found in fresco paintings, a mode of execution which excludes attention to minute elegancies.

The concluding part of this discourse may be considered as the *Jewel of Connoisseurs*; for in it they will find a plain, simple, yet delicate investigation of the merits of those two great masters, as well as of Salvator Rosa, Carlo Maratti, Poussin, Rubens, &c., an investigation founded on the dictates of taste, genius, and sound sense, and the more particularly valuable from being cleared of all the tinsel of terms, which only serve to give a glare to ignorance.

1773.

ÆTAT. 49.

THE intimate friendship between Dr. Johnson and Sir Joshua still existed in its full force; yet so flattering were the compliments which Johnson properly chose to pay to Mrs. Thrale, who sincerely esteemed him, that we find him writing to her, in the month of February, 1773, after a slight illness, for her approbation of his visiting at his friend's house: he says, "I have an invitation to dine at Sir Joshua Reynolds's on Tuesday; may I accept it? I have undertaken to beg from you the favour of lending Miss Reynolds, Newton on the Prophecies, &c." This, however, was, probably, mere matter of compliment, or to consult her on its safety in respect to his returning health;

for Sir Joshua's house and table were always open to his friends, with invitation or without, and as freely made use of.

To Goldsmith, in particular, he was always attentive; a man of whom it has been, not unaptly, said, that his carelessness of conduct, and frivolity of manners, obscured the goodness of his heart. Mr. Cumberland, in his own Memoirs, has a passage peculiarly illustrative of this, where he says, that "Sir Joshua Reynolds was very good to him, and would have drilled him into better trim and order for society, if he would have been amenable; for Reynolds was a perfect gentleman, had good sense, great propriety, with all the social attributes, and all the graces of hospitality, equal to any man. He well knew how to appreciate men of talents, and how near akin the Muse of Poetry was to that Art of which he was so eminent a master. From Goldsmith he caught the subject of his famous Ugolino; what aids he got from others, if he got any, were worthily bestowed, and happily applied."

Mr. Cumberland, however, is, perhaps, rather inaccurate in his assertion respecting the painting of "Ugolino," which was finished in this year, (1773,) and begun, not long before, as an historical subject.

The fact is, that this painting may be said to have been produced as an historical picture by an accident: for the head of the Count had been painted previous to the year 1771, and finished on

what we painters call "a half length canvas," and was, in point of expression, exactly as it now stands, but without any intention, on the part of Sir Joshua, of making it the subject of an historical composition, or having the story of Count Ugolino in his thoughts. Being exposed in the picture gallery, along with his other works, it was seen, either by Mr. Edmund Burke, or Dr. Goldsmith, I am not certain which, who immediately exclaimed, that it struck him as being the precise person, countenance, and expression of the Count Ugolino, as described by Dante in his "Inferno."

This affecting description is given in the thirty-third Canto of the first part of his Comedia, where, in his supposed passage through hell, he introduces Ugolino gnawing the head of his treacherous and cruel enemy, the Archbishop Ruggiero, and then telling his own sad story on the appearance of the poet.

The historical facts are simply these, that in the latter end of the thirteenth century there were great intestine divisions, in the city and state of Pisa in Italy, for the sovereignty; divisions which gave rise to the well known contests of the Guelphs and Ghibellines. The former of these consisted of two parties, at the head of which were Visconti and Ugolino: whilst the Archbishop Ruggiero led the third.

Between this latter and Ugolino a compromise took place, by which means Visconti and his par-

tizans were driven out ; when Ruggiero, finding the Guelph faction considerably weakened, immediately plotted against his quondam friend, already elected sovereign. The mob being excited by the crafty priest against their new prince, the unfortunate Ugolino was overpowered, and he and his two sons, together with two grandsons, were then conveyed to the city prison, where they remained some months, until the Pisans being excommunicated by the Pope, they became so enraged, that they determined to revenge themselves on the unhappy prisoners ; and having accordingly strongly secured and barricadoed the doors of the dungeon, they threw the keys of the prison into the river Arno, so that Ugolino and his unhappy offspring perished.

Thus far the historian—when the imagination of the poet undertook to fill up the awful hiatus between the sealing of their doom and the last moment of expiring nature : and of the poet's powers I am happy to be able to give an illustration, in the following beautiful translation by my friend Mr. Nathaniel Howard, of Plymouth, Devon, who is an ornament to his country :

“ La Bocca s'allevò dal fiero pasto
Quel peccator,” &c.

“ The sinner pausing from his grim repast
Wip'd in the miscreant's hair his gory jaws,
‘ My desperate woe, obedient to thy will,
I now relate,’ he answer'd ; ‘ tho' with pain

Remembrance wring my heart. For if my tale
Should to this traitor, whom I gnaw, produce
The fruit of infamy, tho' tears gush forth,
Yet will I speak.—I know not whence thou art,
Or what commission brings thee to this gulf,
But speech, in truth, bespeaks thee Tuscan born.
Know, Ugolino and that prelate base,
Ruggiero, meet thy presence; mark our forms.
I need not mention that his evil mind
First wrong'd my confidence, then caused my death;
But what lies undivulg'd shall now be heard,
The cruel manner of my lingering doom:
Then shalt thou learn the colour of his guilt.
Within the iron dungeon, which still bears
The name of "Famine" since my dreadful death,
And still, where others pine, there thro' the grate
Shone many a moon; and oft my feverish dreams
Unveil'd the future to my mental view.
This priest, I dreamt, was leader of the chase;—
Swift to the Julian mountain, with his whelps,
Hurried the wolf: with blood-hounds gaunt and keen—
Lanfranchi and Sismondi, and the chief
Gualundi follow'd. Soon the course was spent;
The victim and his infant race grew faint:
When on them sprang, I thought, the savage pack,
And with their tusks transpierc'd their panting sides.
This wak'd me ere the dawn; when, in their sleep,
I heard my children groan and call for bread—
Oh cruel! should no pity touch thy soul
To think how much a father's heart presag'd?—
If now thou shed'st no tears, what have thy eyes
Been us'd to weep at?—Now my boys awoke:
The hour arriv'd, when each expected food,
As wonted, would be brought him;—but his heart
Mistrusted, when each thought upon his dream.
And I, O horrible! that instant heard
The dungeon doors, below, more firmly lock'd:
In desp'rate silence on my sons I gaz'd—
I could not weep—My heart was turn'd to stone.

The little victims wept; and one began,
 My dear Anselmo: '*Father! why that look?—*
 '*What ails my father?*'—Ah! I could not weep,
 Nor answer all that day, nor yet the night,
 'Till on the world another morn arose.

As faintly thro' our doleful prison gleam'd
 The trem'lous ray, so I could view again
 Each face, on which my features were imprest;—
 Both hands I gnaw'd in agony and rage.
 Sweet innocents! they thought me hunger-stung,
 And, rising on a sudden, all exclaim'd,
 'Father! our anguish would be less severe
 'If thou would'st feed on us. This fleshly vest
 'Thou did'st bestow, now take it back again.'—
 I check'd my inward nature, lest my groans
 Should aggravate their anguish. *All were mute*
 That bitter day, and all the morrow. Earth!
 Why did'st thou not, obdurate earth! dispart?
 The fourth sad morning came, when at my feet
 My Gaddo fell extended: 'Help!' he cried,
 '*Can'st thou not help me, father?*'—and expired.
 So wither'd, as thou see'st me; one by one,
 I saw my children, ere the sixth noon die:
 And, seiz'd with sudden blindness, on my knees
 I grop'd among them, calling each by name
 For three days after they were dead.—At last,
 Famine and death clos'd up the scene of woe.'

“So having said, with dark, distorted eyes,
 He on the wretched skull infix'd his teeth,
 And, like a mastiff, gnaw'd the solid bone.”

After this exquisite detail by the poet, the subject was taken up by the sculptor, and Richardson, in his “*Science of a Connoisseur*,” relates that Michael Angelo Buonarotti composed a bas-relief of the count sitting with his four children, one of which lay dead at his feet: over their heads

was a figure to represent Famine, and beneath them another, personifying the river Arno, on whose banks the tragedy was acted.

The whole subject is well handled by Richardson, the painter, and may be read with pleasure, as relative to the picture, although written long before the idea started by Burke was adopted by Sir Joshua, who immediately had his canvas enlarged, in order that he might be enabled to add the other figures, and to complete his painting of the impressive description of the Italian poet.

The picture, when finished, was bought by the late Duke of Dorset for four hundred guineas; and it has since been noticed by Dr. Joseph Warton, who, in his *Essay on the Genius and Writings of Pope*, introduces the story in exemplification of some pathetic passages in that writer; and then adds—"Sir Joshua Reynolds, whose mind is stored with great and exalted ideas, has lately shown, by a picture on this subject, how qualified he is to preside at a Royal Academy, and that he has talents that ought not to be confined to portrait painting."

The following lines were made as descriptive of the surprise and astonishment of Omiah, a native of Otahete, when he was introduced to see the painting of Count Ugolino in Sir Joshua Reynolds's gallery.

"But ah! what scene now strikes with wild affright?
What heart-felt horrors pain my aching sight!—

Say, rev'rend Sire, whence all this mis'ry?—speak?
 Why sits pale hunger preying on thy cheek?
 Why on thy brow that dark despondent gloom?—
 What hand, accurst, has wrought thy barb'rous doom?
 Say, whence these piteous babes in early breath
 The fated prey of unrelenting death?—
 He hears me not; but, fix'd in silent grief,
 The tortur'd soul is lost to all relief!
 Speak, hoary wretch! Oh make these mis'ries known—
 Nor, sunk in woe, be thus transform'd to stone!
 Thou shalt not die—to nature this I owe:
 Sweet mercy lives,—and lives the friend of woe!
 I fly to free them——' when, with strange surprize,
 His honest fingers contradict his eyes:
 With wonder struck, he doubts which sense is true;
 Returns to touch, and is convinc'd anew.
 'Twas fiction all—illusion and deceit;
 Magic and Reynolds wrought the wond'rous cheat:
 His mimic pencil nature's fire has caught,
 And paints at once the feature and the thought."

Any anecdotes of Reynolds's paintings must be acceptable; in addition, therefore, to the circumstances connected with the "Ugolino," I may here record, that the picture of "the Children in the Wood," by Sir Joshua, may be said also to have been produced by an accident, at least as an historical composition: for when the Beggar Infant, who was sitting to him for some other picture, during the sitting fell asleep, Reynolds was so pleased with the innocence of the object, that he would not disturb its repose to go on with the picture on which he was engaged, but took up a fresh canvas, and quickly painted the child's head as it lay before it moved; and as the

infant altered its position, still in sleep, he sketched another view of its head on the same canvas. He afterwards finished a back ground of a woody scenery, and by adding the robin red-breast converted it into the subject of the Children in the Wood.*

Some time after this, his pencil gave to the world another historical subject of great celebrity, the Infant Jupiter, now the property of the Duke of Rutland.†

When Goldsmith's comedy of "She Stoops to Conquer," was to be brought out on the stage, on the 15th of March in this year, he was at a loss what name to give it, till the very last moment, and then, in great haste, called it "She Stoops to Conquer, or the Mistakes of a Night." Sir Joshua, who disliked this name for a play, offered a much better to him, saying, "You ought to call it the Belle's Stratagem, and if you do not I will damn it." However, Goldsmith chose to

* The mother of the beggar infant at one time had nearly given a finale to Sir Joshua's studies from this subject, whilst he was employed in painting from it, by carelessly letting the child fall over her arm on the floor; which, as she sat at the time in a chair raised some height above it, made the fall very considerable; but, by great good fortune, the child received no material injury from the accident.

† It may not be undeserving of notice, that there is a duplicate of the Infant Jupiter (possessed by the Duke of Rutland;) as I well remember having prepared a copy for Sir Joshua in a ground-work on black and white.

name it himself, as above; and Mrs. Cowley has since given that name to one of her comedies.

Goldsmith was in great anxiety about its success: he was much distressed in his finances at the time, and all his hopes hung on the event; and at the dinner preceding the representation of his play, his mouth became so parched and dry, from the agitation of his mind, that he was unable to swallow a single mouthful. The actors themselves had great doubts of its success: but, contrary to their expectations, the play was received with great applause; Sir Joshua and a large party of friends going for the purpose of supporting it if necessary. The dinner party, which took place at the Shakspeare, is humourously described by Cumberland. Dr. Johnson took the head of the table, and there were present the Burkes, Caleb Whiteford, Major Mills, &c., &c.*

When the play was in preparation at the theatre, Miss Reynolds, with a few other ladies, her friends, accompanied by Goldsmith, went one morning to the house to attend its rehearsal. Mr. Shuter afterwards performed a principal character in this play, in which he displayed infinite spirit;

* I recollect that Dr. Goldsmith gave me an order soon after this, with which I went to see this comedy; and the next time I saw him, he inquired of me what my opinion was of it. I told him that I would not presume to be a judge of its merits; he asked, "Did it make you laugh?" I answered, "Exceedingly." "Then," said the Doctor, "that is all I require."

yet when he appeared before this small and select audience, he betrayed the strongest marks of shyness, even to bashfulness: which proves that the smallest novelty in situation, or deviation from accustomed habits, is sufficient to discompose the veteran professor; for when Shuter appeared before a crowded house, he always felt himself perfectly easy.*

It was about this period that Goldsmith, ever fearful of being thought insignificant, was much offended with Garrick, who he conceived had treated him on some occasions with great hauteur. In relating the matter to Sir Joshua, he said he could not suffer such airs of superiority from one who was only a poor player; but Sir Joshua replied, "No, no, don't say that; he is no *poor* player surely."

Speaking to Sir Joshua concerning Goldsmith, I asked his opinion of him as a poet, and if he did

* I remember another similar instance, which a late illustrious General told me of himself; that being at some distance from London with his regiment, the King, Queen, and several others of the Royal Family, together with Mr. Pitt, and many ministers of state as well as courtiers, came to see the review, which was to take place that morning, he commanding as the General: when, being in the presence of personages so conspicuously high, either for rank or talents, he confessed that he felt, while conversing with them, an awkward shyness; but immediately on mounting his horse, and manœuvring at the head of his troops, he became as perfectly unembarrassed as if he was at home; and could not help laughing to himself, when he saw what droll figures some of the courtiers made, mounted on chargers.

not consider him as very excellent: his answer was, that Goldsmith, as a poet, he believed, was about the degree of Addison.

Goldsmith, it is well known, was of an imprudent and careless disposition, insomuch, that I have heard Sir Joshua remark of him, in times of his greatest distress, he was often obliged to supplicate a friend for the loan of ten pounds for his immediate relief; yet, if by accident a distressed petitioner told him a piteous tale, nay if a subscription for any folly was proposed to him, he, without any thought of his own poverty, would, with an air of generosity, freely bestow on the person, who solicited for it, the very loan he had himself but just before obtained.

One day Dr. Johnson and Dr. Goldsmith meeting at Sir Joshua Reynolds's table, the conversation turned on the merits of that well known tragedy, Otway's Venice Preserved, which Goldsmith highly extolled, asserting, that of all tragedies it was the one nearest in excellence to Shakspeare; when Johnson, in his peremptory manner, contradicted him, and pronounced that there were not forty good lines to be found in the whole play; adding, "Pooh! what stuff are these lines:—
'What feminine tales hast thou been listening to, of unaired shirts, catarrhs, and tooth-ach got by thin soled shoes?'"

"True," replied Goldsmith, "to be sure that is very like Shakspeare."

Sir Joshua used to say, that he thought any man of tolerable capacity might write a tragedy, such as an audience would receive from the stage without objection; but that it required a real genius for humour, together with considerable taste, to write a comedy. The remark has been made by Sorbriere, an eminent French physician, who gives ample reasons for this opinion.”*

* “ More tragedies than comedies are produced. Young men first make an attempt at tragedy; not being able, for want of knowledge and experience, to attempt any other kind of writing. Their hero of the tragedy is, for the most part, a fictitious character, and Phœbus and the Muses are invoked to fit him out for appearing. On the contrary, the characters of a comedy are such as we meet with daily in the streets at every turn; and we have only to transcribe their words and actions. It is true, that those we esteem the most excellent painters are not frequently the best copyists; and that good historians are not always skilful in drawing characters. But, perhaps, this is a defect in them; and, to speak fairly, the painter who copies nature exactly, and with art, is surely as deserving of our praise as he who cannot paint after nature, but looks for an original in his caprice. It appears that comedy is the most difficult of dramatic works: as the poet imitates characters which are under the observation of all, and whose opinions must confirm the likeness of the portraiture. The style of comedy is less arduous than that of tragedy: as there is less art in running very fast, and skipping up and down, than in a regular march or a graceful dance. Yet it is not so difficult to soar in heroic verse as to represent common life; which requires a steady and vigorous pencil.”

Samuel Sorbriere, an eminent physician in Paris, in the time of Louis XIV, and patronized by Cardinal Mazarin, was born in the year 1610, and died in 1670.

Sir Joshua thought that species of the drama, called tragi-comedy, was natural, because similar to the combinations of events, which are frequently met with in real life.

When the much praised tragedy of Braganza was brought out on the stage at Drury Lane Theatre, Sir Joshua went to the first representation, and sat in the orchestra, a place he always preferred on account of his difficulty of hearing; he was accompanied by Mr. Garrick. The performance of Mrs. Yates, as Duchess of Braganza, gave universal satisfaction, and was received with the greatest applause. I heard Sir Joshua say, that when he turned to see how Garrick felt on the occasion he perceived his eyes suffused with tears.

Mr. Edmund Burke had great objection to that scene in the tragedy, in which poison is intended to be given infused in the holy wafer, he seemed to conceive it to be a new invention, saying such dreadful modes of wickedness ought not to have been divulged to the world. But surely Mr. Burke must have known that it had been practised before the drama of Braganza was ever thought of, and that it has been also recorded in history.

The following elegant letter to Sir Joshua, as it relates to one of his most distinguished performances, together with his answer, in which that work is described, certainly cannot be unacceptable to the reader.

“ To Sir Joshua Reynolds.

“ DEAR SIR JOSHUA,

“ This letter will be delivered to you by Miss ———, who intends to sit to you with her two sisters, to compose a picture, of which I am

to have the honour of being the possessor. I wish to have their portraits together at full length, representing some emblematical or historical subject; the idea of which, and the attitudes which will best suit their forms, cannot be so well imagined as by one who has so eminently distinguished himself by his genius and poetic invention. Give me leave to mention to you (notwithstanding I am well assured you want no incitement to make your works complete,) that besides the advantage you will have in the superiority of the beauty and elegance of those subjects which no doubt will of themselves convey a degree of instruction, you will, I hope, find that these young ladies, from their high opinion of your powers, will not spare their time, in order to render this picture in every particular a most superior production. I shall add the honour you will acquire in conveying to posterity the resemblances of three sisters so distinguished for different species of beauty; and what I flatter myself will not be the smallest reason for particular attention to this work, the great obligation you will confer on me in making it perfect.

“ I am with great esteem,

“ Dear Sir Joshua,

“ Your very sincere friend and humble servant.

“ *Dublin, May 27th, 1773.*

Sir Joshua after having begun this capital picture, proposed to him in the foregoing letter, and

having proceeded so far in it as to finish the three portrait heads, and sketch the outline of the composition, was induced to take a trip to Portsmouth with a party of friends on the occasion of the King's reviewing the navy at that port; and afterwards went to Oxford, as will be noticed again. On his return he wrote the following answer to the above letter.

“ SIR,

“ I intended long ago to have returned you thanks for the agreeable employment in which you have engaged me, and likewise for the very obliging manner in which this favour was conferred; but immediately after the heads were finished, I was enticed away to Portsmouth, and from thence to Oxford, from whence I am but just returned; so that this is the first quiet minute I have had for this month past; though it is a little delayed by these holidays, it will not, upon the whole, fare the worse for it, as I am returned with a very keen appetite to the work. This picture is the great object of my mind at present. You have been already informed, I have no doubt, of the subject which we have chosen; the adorning a Term of Hymen with festoons of flowers. This affords sufficient employment to the figures, and gives an opportunity of introducing a variety of graceful historical attitudes. I have every inducement to exert myself on this occasion, both from

the confidence you have placed in me, and from the subjects you have presented to me, which are such as I am never likely to meet with again as long as I live, and I flatter myself that, however inferior the picture may be to what I wish it, or what it ought, it will be the best picture I ever painted. I beg leave to congratulate you and Mrs. G——, and express my sincere wishes for that perfect happiness to which you are both so well intitled.

“ I am, with great respect, &c.

“ JOSHUA REYNOLDS.

“ I shall send away your picture (the best of the two) immediately; the other I know is to remain here. I have forgot to what place it is to be sent.”

The visit to Oxford, mentioned in the foregoing letter, gained an additional honour to be conferred upon Sir Joshua, the variety of whose talents, added to the eminence he had acquired, qualified him to share the honours of the first scientific institutions, and in consequence of which he had, for some time before the present period, been admitted to the Royal, Antiquarian, and Dilletante Societies; and when the late Earl of Guildford, then Lord North, was installed Chancellor of the University of Oxford, in the first week of July in this year, Sir Joshua was, at the same time, admitted to the honorary degree of Doctor of Civil Law.

On that day fifteen persons only were admitted; and it is a remarkable fact, that Sir Joshua, and Dr. Beattie just arrived from Scotland, were the only two who were distinguished by an encomium from Dr. Vansittart, the Professor of Civil Law, whose duty it is to present the graduates to the Chancellor. It is also well known to be customary, when the graduate bows and takes his seat, that there should, on particular occasions, be a clapping of hands in the theatre, sometimes loud, and sometimes but faint; on this occasion, however, it is related, that those two were the only personages who received any marks of extraordinary applause.

Sir Joshua about this time, after repeated and most earnest invitations from a noble duke, to visit him at his splendid mansion, at length complied with his request, and arriving in the evening he was much mortified to find a very cold reception both from the duke and duchess, for which he was totally unable to account, as previously they had always been so gracious; when afterwards relating the circumstance to his sister, she asked him if he appeared before them in his boots, just as he came off his journey, and not in his evening dress; he answered yes. Then said she, that was the very reason; they thought it a mark of great disrespect in your not complying with the etiquette.

I remember Dr. Jenner told me a circumstance something similar of a physician in the country,

who was called upon to visit a duchess then in the neighbourhood, who was near dying of an inflammation in her bowels, and when he came to the house, having rid on horseback, the attendant servant on the duchess would not suffer him to enter the sick apartment, though her grace was in such immediate and imminent danger of her life, until he had equipped himself in silk stockings, shoes, and buckles, which they lent him for that purpose.

Sir Joshua entertained a great friendship for Dr. Beattie, whom he esteemed as an honest humble man of considerable abilities: indeed, it forms a very prominent feature in the "Life" of the latter, where it is dwelt on with an allowable degree of complacency, that Sir Joshua paid him much attention during his visits to London, (respecting him more for his virtues than his talents,) frequently entertaining him, both at his house in town, and at his villa on Richmond Hill, testifying, by every means in his power, the esteem he felt for him as a friend, and the opinion he held respecting his writings; while, as Sir William Forbes adds, Dr. Beattie "on the other hand, loved Sir Joshua, for the amiable simplicity of his manners and character, and justly admired the masterly productions of his pencil, as well as duly appreciated his merit in the composition of those truly classical discourses which he delivered to the students in the Royal Academy."

The gentleman above alluded to will, I have no doubt, excuse me in this instance for availing myself of some particulars in his work, highly honourable to both of his amiable and deceased friends, and which refer pointedly to the present part of the subject. Sir William observes, that how properly Dr. Beattie estimated the various talents of Sir Joshua, may be drawn from an extract of his diary, and which he transcribed in the Doctor's own words, because, being a private record merely of his own thoughts, it may be relied on as speaking the genuine language of his heart. This extract is dated Sunday the 15th of August, and says, "We proposed (Dr. and Mrs. B.) to have gone to Arno's Grove, but Sir Joshua Reynolds insisted on it, that we should stay till tomorrow, and partake of a haunch of venison with him to-day, at his house on Richmond Hill. Accordingly at eleven, Mrs. Beattie, Miss Reynolds, Mr. Barette, and Mr. Palmer, set out in Sir Joshua's coach for Richmond. At twelve he and I went in a post chaise, and by the way paid a visit to the Bishop of Chester,* who was very earnest for us to fix a day for dining with him; but I could not fix one just now, on account of the present state of my affairs. After dining at Richmond, we all returned to town, about eight o'clock. This day I had a great deal of conversation with

* Dr. Markham.

Sir Joshua Reynolds on critical and philosophical subjects. I find him to be a man, not only of excellent taste in painting and poetry, but of an enlarged understanding and truly philosophical mind. His notions of painting are not at all the same with those that are entertained by the generality of painters and others. Artificial and contrasted attitudes, and groupes, he makes no account of; it is the truth and simplicity of nature which he is ambitious to imitate; and these, it must be allowed, he possesses the art of blending with the most exquisite grace, the most animated expression. He speaks with contempt of those who suppose grace to consist in erect position, turned out toes, or the frippery of modern dress. Indeed, whatever account we make of the colouring of this great artist, (which some people object to,) it is impossible to deny him the praise of being the greatest designer of any age. In his pictures there is a grace, a variety, an expression, a simplicity, which I have never seen in the works of any other painter. His portraits are distinguished from all others, by this, that they exhibit an exact imitation, not only of the features, but also of the character of the person represented. His picture of Garrick, between Tragedy and Comedy, he tells me he finished in a week," &c. &c. This although but an aukward description of Sir Joshua's character, yet I insert to shew what an impression his talents had made on the simplicity of Beattie.

Dr. Beattie has also strongly marked his high admiration of his friend in his *Essay on Poetry and Music*, where he joins his name with that of Raffaele. In this, having first given praise to both for their assuming nature as their model, to the utter exclusion of fashion, at least as far as is possible, he adds, that “on this account their works must give pleasure, and appear elegant as long as men are capable of forming general ideas, and of judging from them.” The last mentioned incomparable artist (meaning Sir Joshua,) is particularly observant of children, whose looks and attitudes, being less under the controul of art, and local manners, are more characteristical of the species than those of men and women. This field of observation supplied him with many fine figures, particularly that most excellent one of *Comedy*, struggling for and winning (for who can resist her?) the affections of Garrick—a figure which could never have occurred to the imagination of a painter who had confined his views to grown persons, looking and moving in all the formality of polite life—a figure which, in all ages and countries, would be pronounced natural and engaging.”

To all these testimonies in favor of Sir Joshua, Sir William Forbes adds, from his own pen, this elegant compliment: “To that great artist, and excellent man, whose house one of our mutual friends has well denominated the common centre

of union for the great, the accomplished, the learned and the ingenious, I must equally pay my grateful acknowledgments for the uninterrupted friendship with which he honoured me, as well as for an introduction to the notice of some distinguished characters, to whom I should not otherwise have had the means of being known.”

There is a remarkably fine allegorical picture painted by Sir Joshua, representing the portrait of Dr. James Beattie.

The progress of this celebrated picture is described in Dr. Beattie’s Diary, where he says, “ August 16th, (Monday,) breakfasted with Sir Joshua Reynolds, who this day began the allegorical picture. I sat to him five hours, in which time he finished my head, and sketched out the rest of my figure. The likeness is most striking, and the execution most masterly. The figure is as large as life. The plan is not yet fixed for the rest of the picture. Though I sat five hours I was not in the least fatigued; for by placing a large mirror opposite to my face, Sir Joshua Reynolds put it into my power to see every stroke of his pencil; and I was greatly entertained to observe the progress of the work, and the easy and masterly manner of the artist, which differs as much from that of all the other painters I have seen at work, as the execution of Giardini on the violin differs from that of a common fiddler.”

This portrait of Beattie, when finished, represented the doctor in his university dress as Doctor of Laws, with his volume on the Immutability of Truth under his arm. The angel of Truth is going before him and beating down the Vices, Envy, Falsehood, &c. which are represented by a group of figures falling at his approach, and the principal head in this group is made an exact likeness of Voltaire. When Dr. Goldsmith called on Sir Joshua and saw this picture, he was very indignant at it, and remonstrated with him, saying, "It very ill becomes a man of your eminence and character, Sir Joshua, to condescend to be a mean flatterer, or to wish to degrade so high a genius as Voltaire before so mean a writer as Dr. Beattie; for Dr. Beattie and his book together will, in the space of ten years, not be known ever to have been in existence, but your allegorical picture, and the fame of Voltaire will live for ever to your disgrace as a flatterer."

So much was said respecting the allegorical meaning of Dr. Beattie's picture at the time, that I may be permitted to take some further notice of it; particularly as it gave rise to attacks upon Sir Joshua, not only as to his judgement in its conception, but as to his prudence and propriety in making personal allusions.

Whilst it was yet in its progress, Mrs. Montague wrote to Beattie on the subject, saying, "I

am delighted with Sir Joshua Reynolds's plan, and do not doubt but he will make a very noble picture of it. I class Sir Joshua with the greatest geniuses that have ever appeared in the art of painting; and I wish he was employed by the public in some great work that would do honour to our country in future ages. He has the spirit of a Grecian artist. The Athenians did not employ such men in painting portraits to place over a chimney or the door of a private cabinet. I long to see the picture he is now designing; virtue and truth are subjects worthy of the artist and the man. He has an excellent moral character, and is most pleasing and amiable in society; and with great talents has uncommon humility and gentleness."

Sir William Forbes enters, indeed, more particularly into the subject; and, in addition to my own testimony, that Sir Joshua meant not personally to offend any one by the composition, (though he was not offended himself at *some* likeness being discovered, as I shall shew by a letter in a subsequent part of this Memoir,) I shall give part of Sir William's observations on this point. He says, "In this inestimable piece, which exhibits an exact resemblance of Dr. Beattie's countenance, at that period; he is represented in the gown of Doctor of Laws, with which he was so recently invested at Oxford. Close to the portrait, the artist has introduced an angel, holding

in one hand a pair of scales, as if weighing Truth in the balance, and with the other hand pushing down three hideous figures, supposed to represent Sophistry, Scepticism, and Infidelity; in allusion to Dr. Beattie's Essay on Truth, which had been the foundation of all his fame, and of all the distinction which had been paid him.

“The likeness of Dr. Beattie was most striking, and nothing can exceed the beauty of the angel. The whole composition, as well as execution, is in the very best manner of that inimitable painter, and it has had the good fortune, not always the case with Sir Joshua's pictures, masterly as they are in every other respect, of perfectly preserving the colouring, which is as beautiful at the distance of upwards of thirty years as it was at first, with as much of mellowness only as one could desire.

“Of this admirable performance, Sir Joshua was pleased to make Dr. B. a present, of which he was very justly proud. He preserved it with the utmost care, keeping it always covered with a green silk curtain, and left it to his niece Mrs. Glennie.”

A mezzotinto print has been done from it, and there is also a very handsome engraving from it, in Forbes's Life of Beattie; and that writer adds, “Because one of these figures was a lean figure, (alluding to the subordinate ones introduced,) and the other a fat one, people of lively imaginations pleased themselves with finding in them the portraits of Voltaire and Hume. But Sir Joshua,

I have reason to believe, had no such thought when he painted those figures.”

It is a curious circumstance, too, that Dr. Beattie either mistook the allegorical design himself, or else gave it intentionally another meaning, perhaps out of modesty, for he says, in one of his letters, that the figures represent Prejudice, Scepticism, and Folly, who are shrinking away from the light of the sun that beams on the breast of the angel!

In the latter part of the summer, Sir Joshua made an excursion to Plymouth, whilst on a visit to Plympton; a visit of compliment, for having already been made a freeman of his native town of Plympton, this mark of respect was followed by his being chosen alderman and mayor of that borough, generally called Plympton Maurice, or Earl's Plympton.*

On this occasion he presented his portrait, painted by himself, to the corporation, who placed it in the town hall. It is a good picture with a light sky back ground, and in his academical dress as doctor of laws. †

* To distinguish it from Plympton St Mary's, formerly a convent of Benedictines, about half a mile distant, the abbot of which was lord of the manor, and sat in the house of peers. After the dissolution of religious houses, the town was incorporated by a charter granted in the reign of Queen Elizabeth, under a mayor, recorder, eight aldermen, or principal burgesses, who are called common councilmen, a bailiff, and town clerk, &c.

† The Rev. Mr. Alcock, vicar of Cornwood, a parish in the

So strongly was Sir Joshua attached to the place of his birth, that he declared that this circumstance of his being chosen as mayor, gave him more pleasure than any other honour which he had received during his life: and this sentiment he declared, on one occasion, when it was rather out of place; as the following anecdote will shew.

Of the small villa already mentioned in Dr. Beattie's Diary, which Sir Joshua built for his recreation, on Richmond Hill, Sir William Chambers was the architect; but not because it was intended to make any display of taste in the building, for convenience alone was consulted in it. In the summer season it was the frequent custom of Sir Joshua to dine at this place with select parties of his friends. It happened some little time before he was to be elected Mayor of Plympton,

neighbourhood, presented to Sir Joshua the following distich on the receipt of this valuable present to the corporation.

“Laudat Romanus Raphaelem, Græcus Apellem,
Plympton Reynolden jactat, utrique parem.”

But the new mayor though perhaps pleased with the compliment, modestly declared that he thought it would be assuming too much honour to himself, to have it affixed to, or even put on the back of, the picture.

There is another portrait of him in the neighbourhood painted when young, and now in the possession of T. Lane, Esq. of Coflett, about three miles from Plympton. In this picture he holds one hand over to shadow his eyes, an attitude often chosen by painters when they paint their own portraits.

It is the original picture from which the print was taken that is annexed to this memoir.

as already mentioned, that one day, after dining at the house, himself and his party took an evening walk in Richmond Gardens, when, very unexpectedly, at a turning of one of the avenues, they suddenly met the King, accompanied by a part of the Royal Family ; and as his Majesty saw him, it was impossible for him to withdraw without being noticed. The King called to him, and immediately entered into conversation, and told him that he had been informed of the office that he was soon to be invested with, that of being made the Mayor of his native town of Plympton. Sir Joshua was astonished that so minute and inconsiderable a circumstance, which was of importance only to himself, should have come so quickly to the knowledge of the King ; but he assured his Majesty of its truth, saying that it was an honour which gave him more pleasure than any other he had ever received in his life ; and then, luckily recollecting himself, added, “ except that which your Majesty was graciously pleased to bestow upon me ;” alluding to his knighthood.

About this period, and towards the latter end of 1773, a circumstance arose which promised to be highly beneficial to the Art, but which unfortunately did not fulfil its early promises.

The chapel of Old Somerset-House, which had been given by his Majesty to the Royal Academy, was mentioned one evening at the meeting, as a place which offered a good opportunity of con-

vincing the public at large of the advantages that would arise from ornamenting cathedrals and churches with the productions of the pencil; productions which might be useful in their effect, and at the same time not likely to give offence in a Protestant country. The idea was therefore started, that if the members should ornament this chapel, the example might thus afford an opening for the introduction of the art into other places of a similar nature; and which, as it was then stated, would not only present a new and noble scene of action, that might become highly ornamental to the kingdom, but would be, in some measure, absolutely necessary for the future labour of the numerous students educated under the auspices of the Royal Academy.

All the members were struck with the propriety, and even with the probability of success which attended the scheme; but Sir Joshua Reynolds, in particular, immediately took it up on a bolder plan, and offered an amendment, saying, that instead of the chapel, they should fly at once at higher game, and undertake St. Paul's Cathedral. The grandeur and magnificent liberality of this idea immediately gained the suffrages and plaudits of all present, and the President was empowered to make the proper application to the Dean and Chapter; an application which was immediately acceded to on their part. At that time Dr. Newton, Bishop of Bristol, was the dean of St. Paul's,

and he was a strong advocate in favour of this scheme.

A meeting of the Academy then took place, when six artists were chosen for the attempt; these were Sir Joshua Reynolds, Mr. West the present president, Barry, Dance, Cipriani and Angelica Kauffman.

The Society for the Encouragement of Arts and Manufactures also took up the business, and added four artists to the original number.

The subject, which Sir Joshua proposed to execute, was that of the Virgin and Christ in the Manger, or Nativity; but the whole plan was set aside in consequence of Dr. Terrick, then Bishop of London, having refused his consent.

This has been noticed by Barry, in one of his letters, when he says, "Sir Joshua Reynolds, who had undertaken the management of this business, informed us last Monday, the day after his return from Plympton, where he was chosen mayor, that the Archbishop of Canterbury and Bishop of London had never given any consent to it, and that all thoughts about it must consequently drop."

On a subject so important as the improvement of our national buildings, there can be nothing superfluous in adding the following account of the origin of this scheme for decorating the cathedral of St. Paul's with paintings by living artists, which was thus related to me as authentic.

“ Dr. Newton, late bishop of Bristol, and dean of St. Paul’s, was an enthusiastic admirer and lover of the arts, and also a great friend to artists. One day, Sir Joshua Reynolds and Mr. West were dining with him at his house, and, in the course of conversation, one of them observed how great an ornament it would be to that cathedral if it were to be furnished with appropriate paintings to fill up those large vacant compartments and panels, and which the architect, Sir Christopher Wren himself, had purposed to have added to finish the building. On this, Mr. West generously offered to give a picture of his own painting, and Sir Joshua cheerfully agreed to follow his example, in order to make a beginning. Mr. West proposed to paint the subject of Moses with the Laws; and Sir Joshua offered a Nativity. The bishop was enraptured with the plan; and he, being dean of St. Paul’s, concluded that his influence was fully sufficient to produce a completion of the business.

“ The guardians of the cathedral are the King, the Archbishop of Canterbury, the Bishop of London, and the Dean and Chapter of St. Paul’s, and the Lord-mayor of London, for the time being.

“ The good Dr. Newton first went to the King, whose ready and hearty consent was immediately given, as were likewise those of the archbishop, and also of the lord mayor; and the chapter, with the dean at their head, of course had no objection. But unluckily, the very person who possessed most

power in that church, was the last consulted on the business; that was Dr. Terrick, then bishop of London: and when Dr. Newton paid him a visit to inform him of the hopeful progress he had made, and to receive his consent, the old bishop patiently heard him to the end of his speech, when, assuming a very grave countenance, he replied, “ My good Lord Bishop of Bristol, I have already been distantly and imperfectly informed of such an affair having been in contemplation; but as the sole power at last remains with myself, I therefore inform your lordship, that whilst I live and have the power, I will never suffer the doors of the metropolitan church to be opened for the introduction of popery into it.”*

* It is but justice to the memory of the learned prelate to give the following, which is Bishop Newton's own account of the design of ornamenting St. Paul's cathedral, of which church he was dean and a great friend to the project: but it is observable, that the bishop says nothing of the Society for the Encouragement of Arts. —

“ As he, the bishop, was known to be such a lover of their art, the Royal Academy of Painters, in 1773, made an application to him by their worthy president, Sir Joshua Reynolds, representing, that the art of painting, notwithstanding the present encouragement given to it in England, would never grow up to maturity and perfection, unless it could be introduced into churches as in foreign countries; individuals being, for the most part, fonder of their own portraits, and those of their families, than of any historical pieces: that, to make a beginning, the royal academicians offered their services to the dean and chapter to decorate St. Paul's with scripture histories, and six of their members, Sir Joshua Reynolds, Mr. West, Angelica Kauffman,

“ Dr. Newton was much mortified at the refusal, and reflected upon himself as having de-

Cipriani, Mr. Barry, and, I think, Mr. Dance, had been chosen to paint each a picture for this purpose; that these pictures should be seen, examined, and approved by the academy before they were offered to the dean and chapter, and the dean and chapter might then give directions for alterations and amendments, and receive or refuse them as they thought them worthy or unworthy of the places for which they were designed: none should be put up but such as were entirely approved, and they should all be put up at the charge of the academy, without any expense to the members of the church. St. Paul's had, all along, wanted some such ornaments, for rich and beautiful as it is without, it is too plain and unadorned within.

“ Sir James Thornhill had painted the history of St. Paul in the cupola, the worst part of the church that could have been painted; for the pictures there are most exposed to the changes of the weather, suffer greatly from damp and heat, and, let what will be done to prevent it, it is to be feared, must, in no very long time, all decay and perish. It was happy, therefore, that Sir James's eight original sketches and designs, which were higher finished than usual, in order to be carried and shewn to Queen Anne, were purchased of his family at the recommendation of the dean, in the year 1779, and are hung up in the great room at the Chapter House. Besides the exposition of these pictures to the weather, in the cupola, they are at such a height, that they cannot conveniently be seen from any part, and add little to the beauty and ornament of the church. They had better have been placed below, for below they would have been seen; and there are compartments which were originally designed for bas-reliefs, or such like decorations; but the parliament, as it is said, having taken part of the fabric money, and applied it to King William's wars, Sir Christopher Wren complained that his wings were clipt, and the church was deprived of its ornaments. Here, then, a fair opportunity was offered for retrieving the loss and supplying former defect. It was certainly a most generous and noble offer on the part of the academicians, and

stroyed the project by his indiscreet management, in not having made his first application to the offended Bishop of London.”

the public ought to think themselves greatly obliged to them for it. The dean and chapter were all equally pleased with it; and the dean, in the fullness of his heart, went to communicate it to the great patron of arts, and readily obtained his royal consent and approbation. But the trustees of the fabric, the Archbishop of Canterbury and the Bishop of London, were also to be consulted, and they disapproved of the measure. Bishop Terrick, both as trustee of the fabric, and as bishop of the diocese, strenuously opposed it: whether he took it amiss, that the proposal was not first made to him, and by him the intelligence conveyed to his Majesty; or whether he was really afraid, as he said, that it would occasion a great noise and clamour against it, as an artful introduction of popery. Whatever were his reasons, it must be acknowledged that some other serious persons disapproved the setting up of pictures in churches. It was in truth not an object of that concern, as to run the risk of a general outcry and clamour against it; but the general opinion plainly appeared to be on the contrary side much in favour of the scheme: and, whatever might have been the case in the days of our first reformers, there was surely no danger now of pictures seducing our people into popery and idolatry;—they would only make scripture history better known and remembered. Many other churches and chapels have adopted, and are adopting, this measure, as Rochester, Winchester, Salisbury, St. Stephen's Walbrook, and several colleges in the universities. The House of Commons have given a rich painted window to their church of St. Margaret's, Westminster. Bishop Terrick himself approved, if not contributed, to the setting up of a picture of the Annunciation, by Cipriani, in the chapel of his own college at Clare Hall, at Cambridge:—and why should such ornaments be denied to the capital church in the kingdom? The dean, rather than the scheme should be totally laid aside, proposed to make a trial and experiment how the thing would bear. Most churches and chapels, he observed, have something of ornament and decoration

At that time all sculptures were also prohibited from that cathedral; for Dr. Newton, the dean,

about the communion table. You sometimes see, even in the country,

Moses and Aaron upon a church wall,
Holding up the Commandments for fear they should fall.

But St. Paul's will not well admit of any ornament over the communion table, because it would darken the windows there, which give the principal light to the choir. But near to the communion table are two doors, one opening into the north and the other into the south aisle; and over these two doors are proper compartments for two pictures. It was therefore proposed by the dean, that Sir Joshua Reynolds and Mr. West should paint these two pictures; Mr. West's design being the giving of the two tables to Moses from the cloud of glory, the people all standing beneath; and Sir Joshua's design being the infant Jesus lying in the manger, with the shepherds surrounding, and the light flowing all from the Child, as in the famous *Notte of Corregio*: here was the beginning both of the Law and of the Gospel; here was nothing to encourage superstition or idolatry; nothing that could possibly give any one any just offence. Let the trial only be made by these pictures; and if they occasion any noise and clamour, then let an end be put to the whole affair; if they are well received, and approved and applauded by the public, then let the other artists proceed. But reasonable as this proposition was generally thought to be, it was over-ruled by the same authority as the former; and whether the merits or demerits are greater of those who favoured the design, or of those who defeated it, the present age and impartial posterity must judge. Sir Joshua has wrought up his design into a noble picture; Mr. West exhibited his drawing at one of the public exhibitions of the Royal Academy. Mr. Barry has published an etching of his design, the *Fall of the Angels*, both excellent, both masterly performances; and it is much to be wished that the other artists would follow their example."

who died soon after, left an injunction in his will, that a monument to his memory should be erected

“Some time before this, another opportunity was unfortunately lost of decorating St. Paul’s. When Bishop Newton was only one of the residentiaries, a statuary, of some note, came to him in his summer month of residence, desiring leave to set up a monument in St. Paul’s for one who had formerly been a lord mayor and representative of the city of London. The dean, and his other brethren of the chapter, being in the country, he went to consult with Archbishop Secker upon the subject; and Archbishop Secker was so far from making any objection, that he much approved the design of monuments, saying what advantages foreign churches had over ours, and that St. Paul’s was too naked and bare, for want of monuments, which would be a proper ornament, and give a venerable air to the church, provided care was taken that there be nothing improper in their structure, or in the inscriptions upon them. But when the thing was proposed to Bishop Osbaldeston, he was violent against it: Sir Christopher Wren had designed no such things; there had been no monuments in all the time before he was bishop, and in his time there should be none. He was desired to look upon the print which hung over his head of the inner section of St. Paul’s, wherein he would see that Sir Christopher Wren had designed monuments, especially in the recesses under the windows; but he was not to be convinced; churches, he said, were better without monuments than with them. Since the bishop was so peremptory, it was judged proper not to push the matter any farther; especially since the person for whom the monument was desired was not one of the most illustrious characters, nor deserving to be the first instance of the kind. Few, I conceive, will agree in opinion with Bishop Osbaldeston, that churches are better without monuments than with them. The sense of mankind has been contrary in all ages and in all countries; and it is really a wonder that no more applications have been made for erecting monuments in St. Paul’s. Westminster Abbey is too full of them. It may be said to be incrustated with monuments, and in some places they are ridiculously piled two stories high over

in that church if possible, which was to cost five hundred pounds, with the hope of introducing the arts into that cathedral: this was denied to the family, and his monument, executed by Banks the sculptor, and a very fine one, was then placed in St. Bride's church, of which Newton was the rector, according to his order, in case of a refusal of his first request.

The following petition was intended to be presented to the King, in which is fully evinced the liberal intentions of those artists who first suggested the scheme of making an offer to the public, of much less advantage to themselves than to their successors, and which would give foreigners an idea that the arts were encouraged in the country. Thus the nation would have been partakers of an honour that belonged solely to these spirited individuals.

one another. At St. Paul's there is ample room, and spaces designed for monuments: and what a magnificent and glorious church would it be with a proper intermixture of pictures and statues, and what an ornament and honour to the metropolis and to the kingdom! The great difficulty is to find a suitable person to begin with, of eminence and dignity sufficient to set an example to the rest. Several gentlemen were desirous of opening a public subscription for a monument to Mr. Pope in St. Paul's as had been done to Shakspeare in Westminster Abbey: but Mr. Pope's religion was some objection to this scheme. It was a better thought of erecting the first monument to Bishop Sherlock, whose father had been Dean, and himself Bishop of London so many years."—*Bishop Newton's Life and Anecdotes, prefixed to his Works, 1782, 4to. I. pp. 105—109.*

“ TO THE KING’S MOST EXCELLENT MAJESTY.

“ SIRE,

“ We, the Academicians of the Royal Academy beg leave to express our sentiments of constant gratitude for the patriotic zeal with which your Majesty has protected the arts of design in these kingdoms, by the establishment of the Royal Academy, and by the continual support and countenance with which you have honored that institution.

“ Your Majesty, by your individual encouragement of the arts of design, has given an example to the world equally wise and princely in the magnificent biblical paintings with which you have decorated St. George’s Hall,* and the Royal Chapel of Windsor: herein you have directed those arts to their true end—the cultivation of religion and virtue; for it is by such means only that they have risen to perfection in Greece and Italy, and it is by these means only that they can rise to perfection in any other country.

“ As artists—as lovers of virtue and our country, we anxiously wish to see the truly royal example which your Majesty has given, followed in the principal church of these kingdoms, St. Paul’s cathedral, according to the intention of its architect, Sir Christopher Wren: and, instead of the present unfinished state of its inside, we wish to

* Alluding to the pictures painted by Mr. West, by order of the King, but not yet put up in the chapel.

see it decorated in a manner suitable to the beauty and dignity of its external architecture.

“ Therefore, the historical painters in your Royal Academy, convinced of the advantage which would arise to the arts, and the country, in every point of view, from such an undertaking, are desirous to engage in the decoration of this noble building, with paintings from the Bible, in the most liberal manner; for they conceive that the very small compensation with which their love for their art would induce them to be satisfied, might easily be raised by keeping open the annual exhibition of the Royal Academy a fortnight longer than usual, for two or three years; or by an allowance for a certain time from the additional price, which the exhibition of such works would bring to the cathedral; or by any other means that your Majesty’s wisdom may condescend to suggest.

“ As the arts of design owe their present prosperity, in these kingdoms, to your Majesty’s paternal care, so we are tempted to look up to your gracious protection for the commencement of the intended work, in obtaining the consent of the dean and chapter for that purpose, and for any other preparatory measures, which, in your Majesty’s wisdom, may seem needful.”

(Signed)

In this year also it was, that the Literary Club, which owed its origin, in a great measure, to Sir

Joshua, was enlarged by the addition of two valuable members ; the late Earl of Charlemont, and David Garrick : after which some others were admitted to this select circle of friends, soon after which, a dinner of singular kind of accommodation was given by Mr. Thrale, at his brewery, to Sir Joshua, Johnson, Goldsmith, Garrick, Edmund Burke, Baretti, and others, who dined on beef-steaks broiled on the coppers, seated in a newly made brewing vessel, sufficiently capacious to contain the company conveniently.

So much was Sir Joshua now admired and esteemed, that his acquaintance was considered as an honour, and his name as a passport ; and the latter was eagerly sought after even by those who wished to introduce the efforts of literature to the world.

A very handsome compliment was paid to him at this period, by the editor of Richardson's "Theory of Painting," who dedicated this work to the President.

" SIR,

" A new and improved edition of the works of Jonathan Richardson cannot be inscribed with so much propriety to any body, as to you. The author has, in his "Theory of Painting," discoursed with great judgement on the excellencies of this divine art, and recommended the study of it with a warmth approaching to enthusiasm. His

ideas are noble, and his observation learned. I am emboldened to say this, from a conversation which I had the honour to have with you on this subject.

“ Had Richardson lived to see the inimitable productions of your pencil, he would have congratulated his country on the prospect of a School of Painting likely to contend successfully with those of Italy.

“ At the same time, he would have confessed, that your admirable discourses would have rendered his own writings less necessary.

“ I am, with the greatest respect,” &c., &c.

1774.

ÆTAT. 50.

IN the early part of 1774, a resolution was entered into by the Society of Arts, that a series of Historical or Allegorical pictures should be painted by the first artists in the kingdom, to decorate their new room in the Adelphi. The plan proposed was, that there should be eight historical and two allegorical; the subjects of the former to be taken from the British Annals.

It was also proposed, that the profits arising from the exhibition of those works, for a limited time, should be appropriated to the remuneration of the artists employed. The historical painters chosen were Sir Joshua Reynolds, Angelica Kauffman,

Mess. West, Cipriani, Barry, Wright, Mortimer, and Dance; whilst the allegorical designs were to have been executed by Penny and Romney. Sir Joshua, however, after some deliberation, thought proper to decline the proposal; and the rooms have been since decorated, as is well known, by Barry alone.

This latter artist had now been returned some time from Italy, and notwithstanding the friendship always expressed and shewn towards him by Sir Joshua, he seems to have been actuated in his conduct towards *him*, in several instances, by a capricious ill will, for which Sir Joshua never gave him any cause, but which may, perhaps, have arisen from a petty jealousy at Sir Joshua's having painted a portrait of Burke for his friend Mr. Thrale.

This dispute, for such it was at least on the part of Barry, has been noticed by Barry's biographer; and though I cannot agree with him in part of his observations, yet I shall here give the whole passage as explanatory of the occurrence. In the life prefixed to his works, it is said, that "it may be necessary to premise, that about this time a kind of ill-humour had possessed Barry, in consequence of the extreme intimacy of the Burkes with Sir Joshua Reynolds, which led him to suppose that those friends overlooked his merits to aggrandize Sir Joshua's. There might be (for those things are common to frail human nature) some envy entertained by Barry towards Sir Joshua,

for his respectable connections and his splendid mode of entertaining them, and, perhaps, some little jealousy in the mild Sir Joshua towards him, for a reputation that was rising to eclipse or out-run his own."

"Whatever might be the cause, we see Barry standing upon a point of silly etiquette with the man of all others in the world the most honoured and loved, and in a way to endanger the imputation of ingratitude, had it not been for the dignified moderation displayed by Mr. Burke on the occasion."

This is an allusion to a very curious correspondence which took place at this period between Burke and Barry, respecting the neglect of the latter in executing a portrait of his patron. The correspondence is preserved in Barry's works; and I am of opinion, that whoever reads it, will agree with me, that there was no necessity for accusing Sir Joshua of feeling jealousy at Barry's rising fame, when Barry's own conduct, arising from the waywardness of his own disposition, will easily account for his feeling irritation respecting Sir Joshua.

Indeed his biographer's own confession, of his envious sensations, is enough to preclude the necessity of seeking for any other cause; and, I trust, that the numerous instances which I shall yet have occasion to produce of Sir Joshua's professional suavity and feelings, both in theory and

in practice, will do away any impression which the foregoing passage might have excited to his prejudice.

On the 22d of February in this year, Sir Joshua Reynolds wrote the following letter to Dr. Beattie, which I adduce as a fair specimen of his epistolary powers :

“ I sit down to relieve my mind from great anxiety and uneasiness, and I am sorry when I say that this proceeds from not answering your letter sooner. This seems very strange, you will say, since the cause may be so easily removed ; but the truth of the matter is, I waited to be able to inform you that your picture was finished, which, however, I cannot now do.

“ I must confess to you, that when I sat down, I did intend to tell a sort of a white lie, *that it was finished* ; but on recollecting that I was writing to the author of truth, about a picture of truth, I felt that I ought to say nothing but the truth. The truth then is, that the picture probably will be finished before you receive this letter ; for there is not above a day's work remaining to be done.

“ Mr. Hume has heard from somebody that *he* is introduced in the picture not much to his credit ; there is only a figure covering his face with his hands, which they may call ‘ Hume,’ or any body else ; it is true it has a tolerable broad back. As for Voltaire, I intended he should be one of the group.

“ I intended to write more, but I hear the post-man’s bell. Dr. Johnson, who is with me now, desires his compliments.”

This *unfortunate* picture, which seems doomed to have excited mistaken displeasure, was exhibited in the year 1774 ; and Mrs. Montague says of it, in a letter to Beattie, “ Your portrait is in the exhibition ; it is very like, and the piece worthy of the pencil of Sir Joshua.” Some others, however, were not so pleased with it as the lady seemed to be ; for Beattie himself, in a letter written to her on the 27th of May, in that year, observes, “ Mr. Mason seems now to be tolerably reconciled to the subscription, but he has found a new subject of concern, in this allegorical picture by Sir Joshua Reynolds, which he thinks can hardly fail to hurt my character in good earnest. I know not certainly in what light Mr. Mason considers this picture ; but so far as I have yet heard, he is singular in his opinion.

“ If Mr. Gray had done me the honour to address an ode to me, and speak in high terms of my attack on the sceptics, my enemies might have blamed him for his partiality, and the world might have thought that he had employed his muse in too mean an office ; but would any body have blamed me ? If Sir Joshua Reynolds thinks more favorably of me than I deserve, (which he certainly does,) and if he entertains the same favourable sentiments of my cause, which I wish him

and all the world to entertain, I should be glad to know from Mr. Mason, what there is in all this to fix any blame on my character? Indeed if *I* had planned this picture, and urged Sir Joshua to paint it, and paid him for his trouble, and then have solicited admittance for it into the Exhibition, then the world would have had good reason to exclaim against me as a vain coxcomb; but I am persuaded, that nobody will ever suspect me of this, for nobody can do so, without first supposing that I am a fool."

I have already recorded much criticism, and some censure, respecting the emblematical portrait of Beattie, but it would be the height of injustice to accuse Dr. Beattie of the least blame in respect to the composition of this picture; as the head alone was the only part of it that was finished when the Doctor left London, and returned to Scotland: nor was he consulted by, or had the least knowledge of Sir Joshua's intention till the picture was completely finished; and as it was the design of Reynolds to make a present of this picture to the Doctor, there was the more propriety in not consulting him upon it, for he thus proposed to pay him a high and elegant compliment on his book on the Immutability of Truth. Neither could the Doctor, afterwards, when he saw it, with any kind of decorum, make objections to this valuable present, given to him as a special token of friendship: and, indeed, after all, it must be

clearly perceived, that the whole of the clamour raised about this portrait was the sole produce of envy and ignorance.

The hint for the composition of this memorable picture (as I have been informed) Sir Joshua received from a fine picture by Tintoretto, of a subject somewhat similar, which is in the King's library at Buckingham House. As to the portrait of Voltaire, that Sir Joshua certainly intended to represent in the group, for I well remember, at the time, his having a medal of him, from which he copied the likeness. But as to Hume, I am as certain that he never intended to place him in the picture, nor is there any such resemblance, or the least reason to suppose that the painter thought of him at the time. We see in the above instance how easily envy can swell a mole-hill to a mountain.

Of this subject, however, I presume my readers will think I have given them enough; I shall, therefore, revert to another friend of Sir Joshua's, poor Goldsmith, who left this world on the 4th of April, 1774; the first too of those on whom the epitaphs had been so playfully written, as I have before alluded to in another place.

Just before his death, he had nearly completed a design for the execution of an "Universal Dictionary of the Arts and Sciences." Of this he had published the Prospectus, or, at least, had distributed copies of it amongst his friends and

acquaintances. It did not meet with any warm encouragement, however, from the booksellers, although Sir Joshua Reynolds, Johnson, Garrick, and several others of his literary connections had promised him their assistance on various subjects: and the design was, I believe, entirely given up even previous to his demise.*

Sir Joshua was much affected by the death of Goldsmith, to whom he had been a very sincere friend. He did not touch the pencil for that day, a circumstance most extraordinary for him, who passed *no day without a line*. He acted as executor, and managed in the best manner, the confused state of the Doctor's affairs. At first he intended to have made a grand funeral for him, assisted by several subscriptions to that intent, and to have buried him in the Abbey; his pall-bearers to have been Lord Shelburne, Lord Louth, Sir Joshua himself, Burke, Garrick, &c.; but, on second thoughts, he resolved to have him buried in the plainest and most private manner possible, observing that the most pompous funerals are soon past and forgotten; and that it would be much more prudent to apply what money could be procured, to the purpose of a more substantial and

* I have often heard him complain of the treatment he met with from the booksellers of his time, and the uncivil manner with which they paid him money; but probably this was produced by his own conduct towards them.

more lasting memorial of his departed friend, by a monument ; and he was accordingly, privately interred in the Temple burying-ground.

Sir Joshua went himself to Westminster Abbey, and fixed upon the place where Goldsmith's monument now stands, over a door in the Poets' Corner. He thought himself lucky in being able to find so conspicuous a situation for it, as there scarcely remained another so good.

Nollekens, the sculptor, was employed to make the monument, and Dr. Johnson composed the epitaph.

There is a very fine portrait, which is the only original one, of Dr. Goldsmith, now at Knowle, the seat of the late Duke of Dorset, painted by Sir Joshua.

I remember Miss Reynolds said of this portrait, that it was a very great likeness of the Doctor ; but the most flattered picture she ever knew her brother to have painted.

A lady, who was a great friend of Dr. Goldsmith, earnestly desired to have a lock of his hair to keep as a memorial of him ; and his coffin was opened again, after it had been closed up, to procure this lock of hair from his head : this relic is still in the possession of the family, and is the only one of the kind which has been preserved of the Doctor.

To the record of poor Goldsmith's death, I may add one or two anecdotes not generally known.

I have been informed by the lady who requested a lock of his hair before interment, that he once read to her several chapters of a novel in manuscript which he had in contemplation ; but which he did not live to finish, now irrecoverably lost. The same person has also some of his poetry, never yet published.

An observation of Dr. Beattie, respecting the deceased poet, in a letter to Mrs. Montague, must not be passed over. “ I am sorry for poor Goldsmith. There were some things in his temper which I did not like ; but I liked many things in his genius ; and I was sorry to find, last summer, that he looked upon me as a person who seemed to stand between him and his interest. However, when *next* we meet, all this will be forgotten, and the jealousy of authors, which, Dr. Gregory used to say, was next to that of physicians, will be no more.”

Soon after Goldsmith's death, certain persons dining with Sir Joshua were commenting rather freely on some part of his works, which, in their opinion, neither discovered talent nor originality. To this, Dr. Johnson listened, in his usual growling manner, for some time ; when, at length, his patience being exhausted, he rose, with great dignity, looked them full in the face, and exclaimed, “ If nobody was suffered to abuse poor Goldy, but those who could write as well, he would have few censors.”

Yet, on another occasion, soon after the death of Goldsmith, a lady* of his acquaintance was condoling with Dr. Johnson on their loss, saying, "Poor Dr. Goldsmith! I am exceedingly sorry for him; he was every man's friend!"

"No, Madam," answered Johnson, "he was no man's friend!"

In this seemingly harsh sentence, however, he merely alluded to the careless and imprudent conduct of Goldsmith, as being no friend even to himself, and when that is the case a man is rendered incapable of being of any essential service to any one else.

It has been generally circulated, and believed by many, that Goldsmith was a mere fool in conversation; but, in truth, this has been greatly exaggerated by such as were really fools. In allusion to this notion Mr. Horace Walpole, who admired his writings, said he was "an inspired ideot," and Garrick described him as one,

"——— for shortness call'd Noll,

Who wrote like an angel, but talk'd like poor Poll."

Sir Joshua Reynolds mentioned to Boswell that he frequently had heard Goldsmith talk warmly of the pleasure of being liked, and observe how hard it would be if literary excellence should preclude a man from that satisfaction, which he perceived it often did; from the envy which attended it; and

* Miss Frances Reynolds.

therefore Sir Joshua was convinced, that he was intentionally more absurd, in order to lessen himself in social intercourse, trusting that his character would be sufficiently supported by his works. If it was his intention to appear absurd in company, he was often very successful. This, in my own opinion, was really the case; and I think Sir Joshua was so sensible of the advantage of it, that he, yet in a much less degree, followed the same idea, as he never had a wish to impress his company with any awe of the great abilities with which he was endowed, especially when in the society of those high in rank.

Yet it is a fact that a certain nobleman, an intimate friend of Reynolds, had strangely conceived in his mind such a formidable idea of all those persons who had gained great fame as literary characters, that I have heard Sir Joshua say, he verily believed he could no more have prevailed upon this noble person to dine at the same table with Johnson and Goldsmith, than with two tygers.

And again, that he has frequently seen the whole company struck with an awful silence at the entrance of Goldsmith, but that Goldsmith has quickly dispelled the charm, by his boyish and social manners, and he then has soon become the plaything and favorite of the company.

Probably Goldsmith was not much mortified at sometimes appearing little in the eyes of those who he knew were his inferiors, as he might con-

sole himself that he was able to make them feel his superiority whenever he pleased.

Goldsmith, indeed, may serve as an instance to shew how capriciously nature deals out her gifts to mankind; thus frequently bestowing, on the same individual, qualities which the wisest must admire, accompanied by those which the weakest may despise.

His epitaph in Westminster Abbey, written by Dr. Johnson, is a true character of the eccentric poet.

Among the various tributes to his memory, was one by *Courtney Melmoth*, (Mr. Pratt, I believe,) dedicated to Sir Joshua, "who will naturally receive with kindness whatever is designed as a testimony of justice to a friend that is no more." In this, the dedicator has well attempted to portray the feelings of Sir Joshua's heart.

In the Dedication of his "Deserted Village" to Sir Joshua Reynolds, already noticed, Goldsmith alludes to the death of his eldest brother, Henry, the clergyman; and his various biographers record another, Maurice, who was a younger brother, and of whom it is stated, by Bishop Percy, that having been bred to no business, he, upon some occasion, complained to Oliver that he found it difficult to live like a gentleman. To this Oliver wrote him an answer, begging that he would, without delay, quit so unprofitable a trade, and betake himself to some handicraft employment. Maurice, wisely,

as the Bishop adds, took the hint, and bound himself apprentice to a cabinet-maker, and when out of his indentures set up in business for himself, in which he was engaged during the viceroyalty of the late Duke of Rutland; and his shop being in Dublin, he was noticed by Mr. Orde, since Lord Bolton, the Lord Lieutenant's Secretary, who recommended him to the patronage of the Duke, out of regard to the memory of his brother.

In consequence of this, he received the appointment of inspector of licences in that metropolis, and was also employed as mace bearer, by the Royal Irish Academy, then just established. Both of these places were compatible with his business: and in the former he gave proof of great integrity by detecting a fraud committed on the revenue in his department; and one by which he himself might have profited, if he had not been a man of principle. He has now been dead not more than fifteen years; I enter more particularly into his history, from having seen the following passage in one of Oliver's letters to him: "You talked of being my only brother—I don't understand you. Where is Charles?"

This, indeed, was a question which Maurice could not answer then, nor for many years afterwards; but as the anecdote is curious, and I have it from a friend on whose authority I can rely, I shall give it a place here nearly in his own words.

My friend informed me, that whilst travelling in

the stage coach towards Ireland, in the autumn of 1791, he was joined at Oswestry by a venerable looking gentleman, who, in the course of the morning, mentioned that his name was *Goldsmith*; when one of the party observed, that if he was going to Ireland, that name would be a passport for him. The stranger smiled, and asked the reason why? to which the other replied, that the memory of *Oliver* was embalmed amongst his countrymen. A tear glistened in the stranger's eye, who immediately answered, "I am his brother." The gentleman who had first made the observation on the name, looked doubtingly, and said, "He has but one brother living; I know him well." "True," replied the stranger, "for it may be said that I am risen from the dead, having been for many years supposed to be no longer in the land of the living. I am Charles the youngest of the family. Oliver I know is dead; but of Henry and Maurice I know nothing."

On being informed of various particulars of his family, the stranger then told his simple tale; which was, that having heard of his brother Noll mixing in the first society in London, he took it for granted that his fortune was made, and that he could soon make a brother's also: he therefore left home without notice; but soon found, on his arrival in London, that the picture he had formed of his brother's situation was too highly coloured; that Noll would not introduce him to his great

friends, and, in fact, that, although out of a jail, he was also often out of a lodging.

Disgusted with this entrance into *high life*, and ashamed to return home, the young man left London without acquainting his brother with his intentions, or even writing to his friends in Ireland; and proceeded, a poor adventurer, to Jamaica, where he lived, for many years, without ever renewing an intercourse with his friends, and by whom he was, of course, supposed to be dead; though Oliver may, at first, have imagined that he had returned to Ireland. Years now passed on, and young Charles, by industry and perseverance, began to save some property; soon after which he married a young lady of some fortune, when his children requiring the advantages of further education, he determined to return to England, to examine into the state of society, and into the propriety of bringing over his wife and family: on this project he was then engaged, and was proceeding to Ireland to visit his native home, and with the intention of making himself known to such of his relatives as might still be living. His plan, however, was to conceal his good fortune until he should ascertain their affection and esteem for him.

On arriving at Dublin, the party separated; and my friend, a few weeks afterwards, returning from the north, called at the hotel where he knew Mr. Goldsmith intended to reside. There he met

him; when the amiable old man, for such he really was, told him that he had put his plan in execution; had given himself as much of the appearance of poverty as he could with propriety, and thus proceeded to the shop of his brother Maurice, where he inquired for several articles, and then noticed the name over the door, asking if it had any connection with the famous Dr. Goldsmith.

“I am his brother—his sole surviving brother,” said Maurice.

“What, then,” replied the stranger, “is become of the others?”

“Henry has long been dead; and poor Charles has not been heard of for many years.”

“But suppose Charles were alive,” said the stranger—“would his friends acknowledge him?”

“Oh yes!” replied Maurice, “gladly indeed!”

“He lives, then; but as poor as when he left you.”

Maurice instantly leaped over his counter, hugged him in his arms, and, weeping with pleasure, cried, “Welcome—welcome! here you shall find a home and a brother!”

It is needless to add, that this denouement was perfectly agreeable to the stranger, who was then preparing to return to Jamaica to make his proposed family arrangements; but my friend, having been engaged, for the next twenty years, in traversing the four quarters of the globe, being himself a

Charles went back to Jamaica, and died, leaving his family in very poor circumstances. His wife and a daughter afterwards came to New York, the former

wanderer, has never, since that period, had an opportunity of making inquiries into the welfare of the stranger; for whom he had, indeed, conceived a great esteem, even on a few days' acquaintance.*

Before I dismiss poor Goldsmith from the stage, it may be proper to notice another dedication to Sir Joshua, prefixed to that edition of his works published by Evans, in which he says—

“ SIR,

“ I am happy in having your permission to inscribe to you this complete edition of the truly poetical works of your late ingenious friend, Oliver Goldsmith. They will prove a lasting monument of his genius. Every lover of science must deeply lament, that this excellent writer, after long struggling with adversity, finished his mortal career just as his reputation was firmly established, and he had acquired the friendship of Sir Joshua Reynolds, Dr. Johnson, Mr. Edmund Burke, the Dean of Derry, Mr. Beauclerk, and Mr. Cumberland, —names which adorn our age and nation. It is, Sir, being merely an *echo* of the *public* voice, to celebrate your admirable productions,

“ ‘ In which, to latest time, the artist lives.’ ”

* I have since been informed, that this Mr. Charles Goldsmith brought his wife and family to England soon after, and resided in Somers' Town in much respectability. He has now been dead some years.

bed-ridden from influenza & rheumatism, & the lady was endeavoring to gain a support by her needle. A subscription was begun by Dr. Hawks for their relief. J. W. W.

“ Had Dr. Goldsmith understood the art of painting, of which he modestly declares himself ignorant, his pen would have done justice to the merits of your pencil. He chose a nobler theme, by declaring his ardent affection for the *virtues of your heart*. That you may long continue, Sir, the ornament of your country and the delight of your friends, is the sincere wish of your most obliged humble servant,
T. EVANS.”

In closing the year 1774, it is necessary to take a short view of Reynolds' sixth discourse, which was delivered on the 10th of December.

It is to be observed in this place, that one year had elapsed without his having given a discourse, which was the first omission since its commencement; but as these orations were only given on the evenings when the gold medals were presented to successful candidates as the prize, it had been previously determined in the last year, that as genius was not of quick growth it would be fully sufficient to bestow the prizes in future only once in two years, and this rule has since been regularly followed.

In this discourse, he took a view of the best principles in that part of a painter's art, called “Imitation;” and, after shewing where genius commences, and where it finds a limit, he proved that invention was acquired by being conversant with the inventions of others. To this he sub-

joined some rules for allowable imitation, marked the legal extent of borrowing, and pointed out what might fairly be collected from each specific school of the art.

As this discourse, however, was more of professional than of general import, I shall not discuss it at any length, but shall merely insert two or three passages, which strongly mark the originality of his own genius, and may be said almost to disprove the truth of his position, that Invention and Genius are the children, or at least the pupils, of Imitation.

“ Genius is supposed to be a power of producing excellencies which are out of the rules of art ; a power which no precepts can teach, and which no industry can acquire ”—

“ But the truth is, that the degree of excellence which proclaims Genius is different, in different times and places ;* and what shows it to be so is, that mankind have often changed their opinion upon this matter.”—

“ What we now call Genius begins, not where rules, abstractedly taken, end ; but where known vulgar and trite rules have no longer any place.”—

“ Invention is one of the greatest marks of Genius ; but if we consult experience, we shall find

* The man of genius draws his art from inexhaustible nature, which gives it novelty and interest.

The man of no genius draws his art from art ; hence it becomes stale, vapid, and uninteresting.

that it is by being conversant with the invention of others, that we learn to invent; as, by reading the thoughts of others, we learn to think.”—

“The mind is but a barren soil; a soil which is soon exhausted, and will produce no crop, or only one, unless it be continually fertilized and enriched with foreign matter.”—

Such were a few of the most striking general truths in this discourse; but the fact is, that none of his discourses possess more beauties than this one, though, for the most part, strictly of a professional nature. One anecdote related in it shall close the subject.

“I remember,” said Sir Joshua, “several years ago, to have conversed at Rome with an artist of great fame throughout Europe: he was not without a considerable degree of abilities; but these abilities were by no means equal to his own opinion of them.

“From the reputation he had acquired, he too fondly concluded, that he stood in the same rank, when compared with his predecessors, as he held with regard to his miserable contemporary rivals. In conversation about some particulars of the works of Raffaele, he seemed to have, or to affect to have, a very obscure memory of them. He told me that he had not set his foot in the Vatican for fifteen years together: that he had been in treaty to copy a capital picture of Raffaele, but that the business had gone off; how-

ever, if the agreement had held, his copy would have greatly exceeded the original !

“ The merit of this artist, however great we may suppose it, I am sure would have been far greater, and his presumption would have been far less, if he had visited the Vatican, as in reason he ought to have done, at least once every month in his life.”



ERRATA.

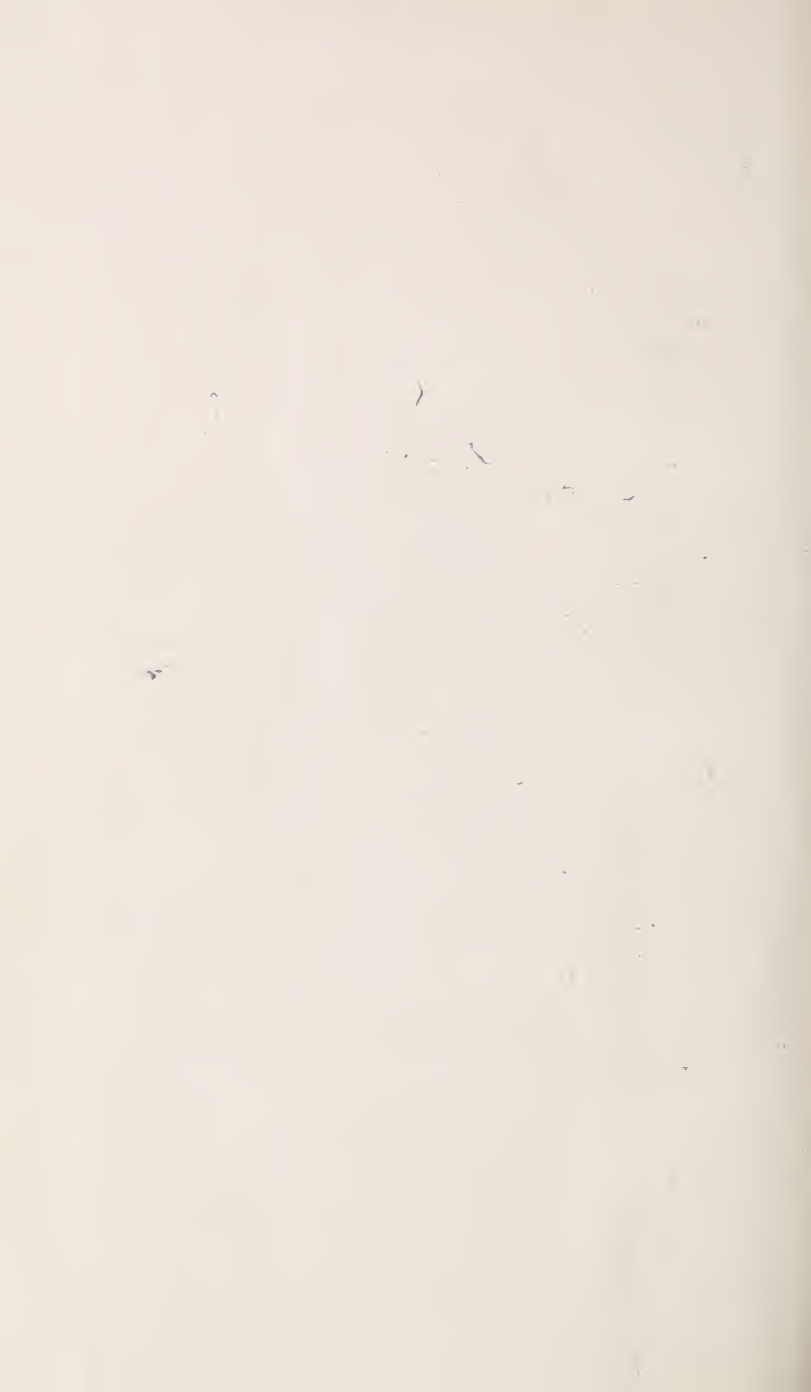
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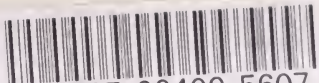
- Page 16, for ÆTAT. 19, read ÆTAT. 17.
19, third line, for maestr, read master.
209, first line, for rat read art.
216, third line, for no read nor.

Volume II.

- 48, sixth line, for the ost read the most.
248, for Humphries read Humphry.







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